



Locomotive Noise Testing

Approach, Observations, and Mitigation

Derek Edmondson



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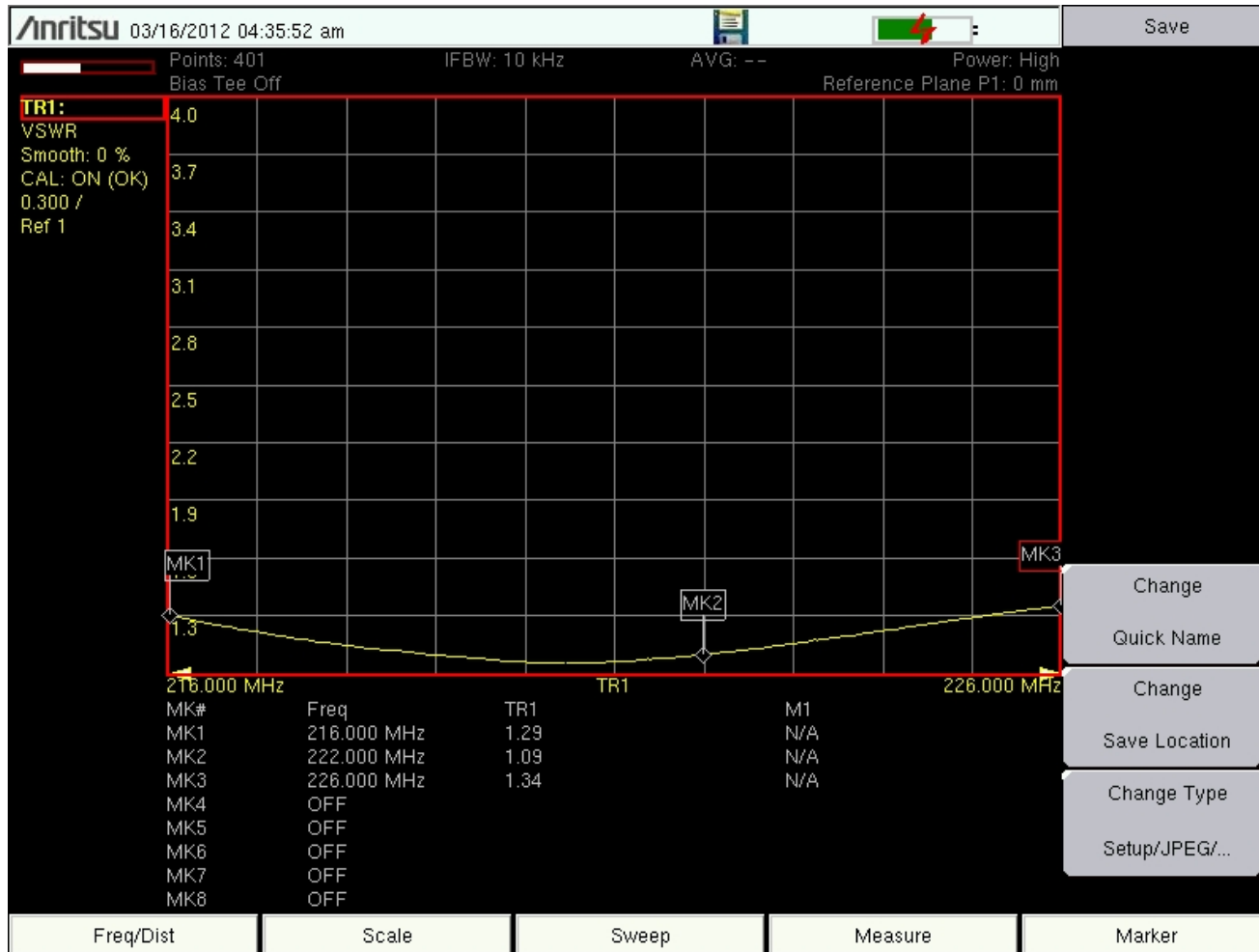
Locomotive Noise Test Battery

- Antenna VSWR
- Cable and Filter (if equipped) Insertion Loss
- Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation—Unfiltered
- Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation—Filtered
- RX Intermodulation
- TX Intermodulation
- Electro-Mechanical EMI- Twelve Locomotive Operational States
- Load Test BER ($1E-4$) –Ten Locomotive Operational States

Antenna VSWR

- Purpose of this Test
 - Verify Antenna Integrity on all Antennas Under Test
 - Connectors clean and intact
 - Radiating elements not compromised
 - Characterize the Band-Pass Parameters of each Antenna
 - Cohesive with signals of interest

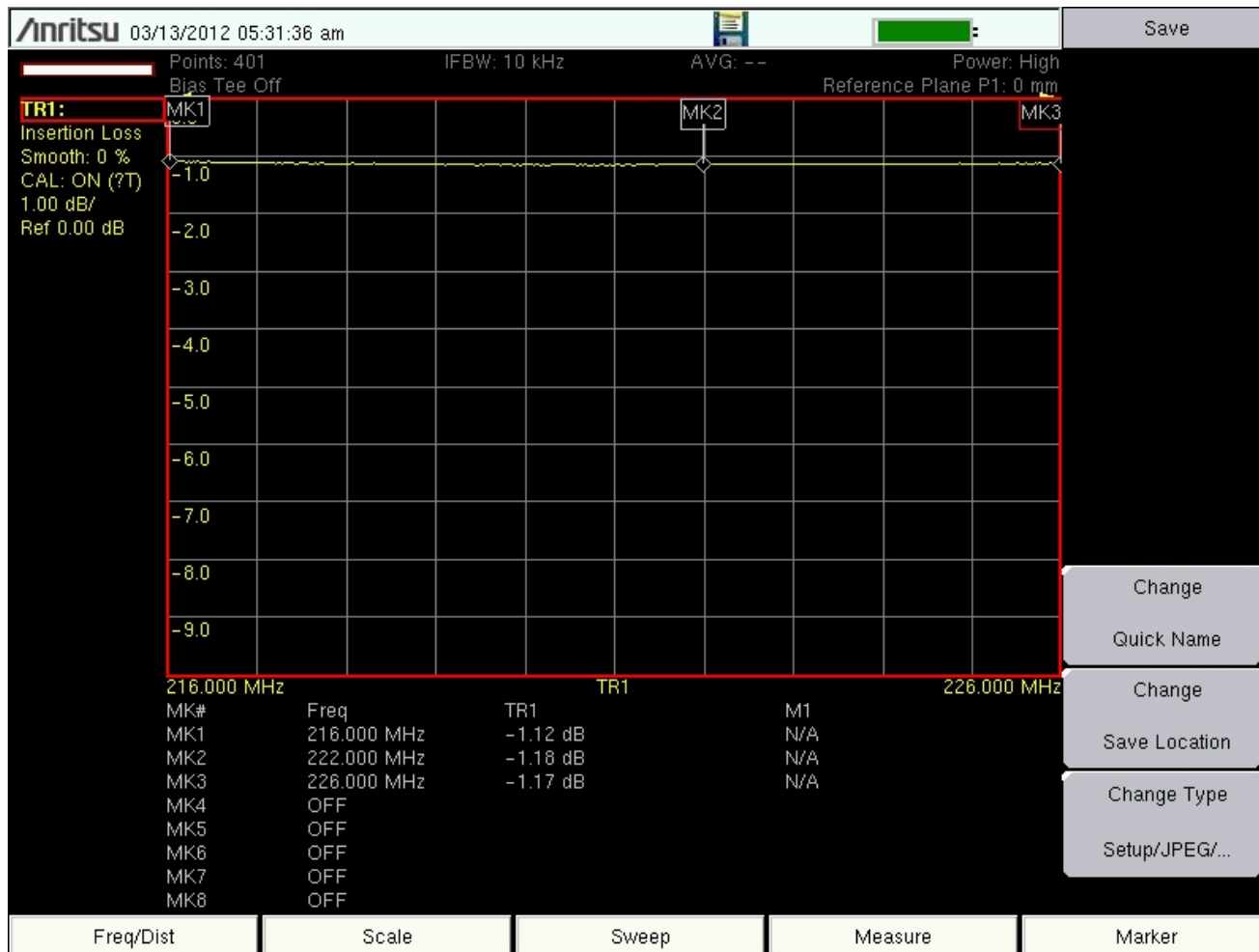
Antenna VSWR



Cable and Filter Insertion Loss

- Purpose of this Test
 - Verify Cable Integrity on all RF Cables Under Test
 - Connectors clean and intact
 - Cable not compromised by cable handling during installation
 - Characterize the Band-Pass Parameters of each Filter
 - Cohesive with signals of interest

Cable and Filter Insertion Loss



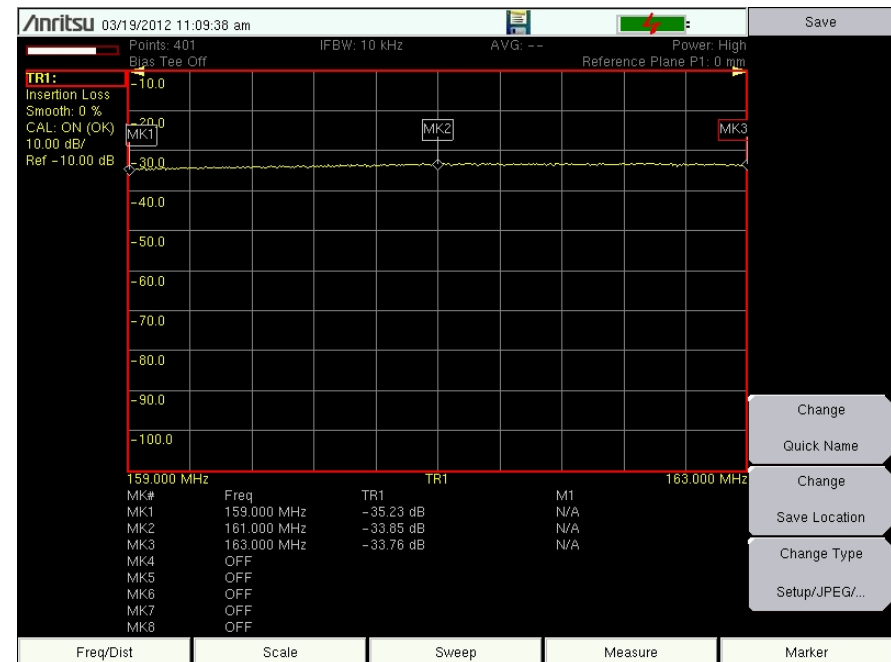
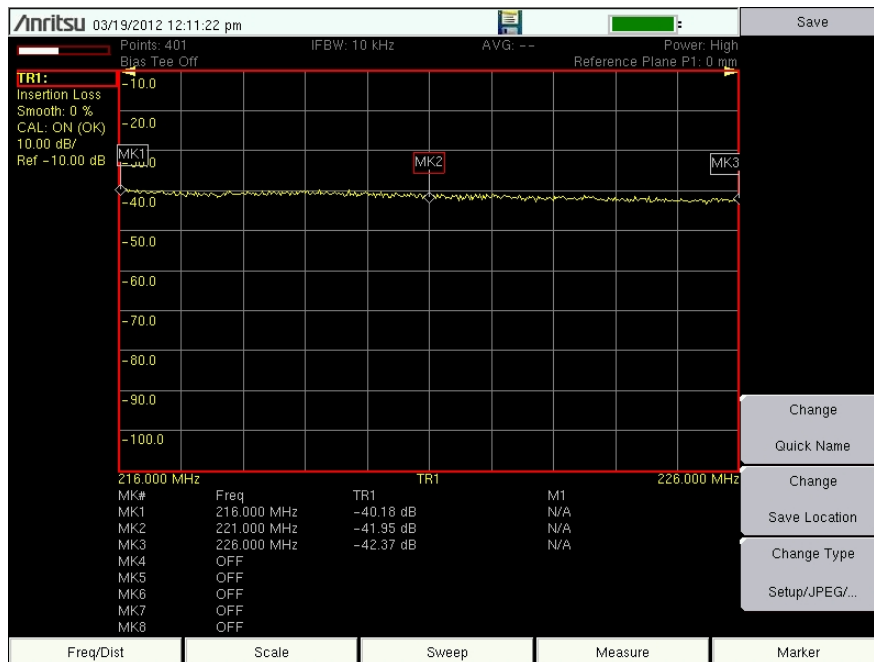
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

- Purpose of this Test
 - Determine Antenna to Antenna Isolation from the perspective of the Radio Port on each Radio Under Test
 - Quantify the Amplitude of any RF Energy on any expected Onboard Operating Frequency being presented to Onboard Radio Transmitters or Receivers
 - Test is Executed without Filters, and with Filters

Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

220 MHz Energy
TX 220 Antenna (Unfiltered)
RX 161 Antenna (Unfiltered)
Isolation: ~41 dB

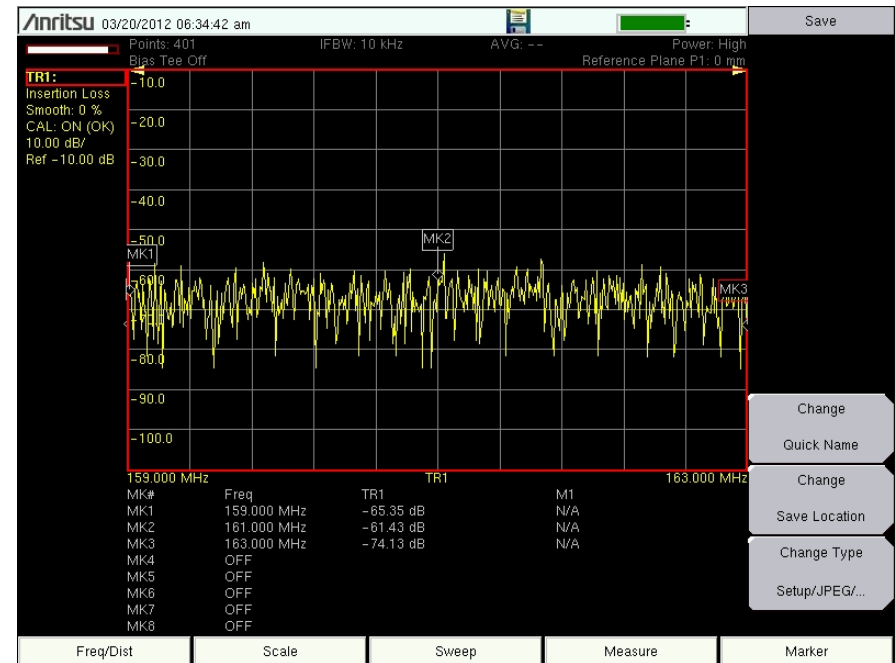
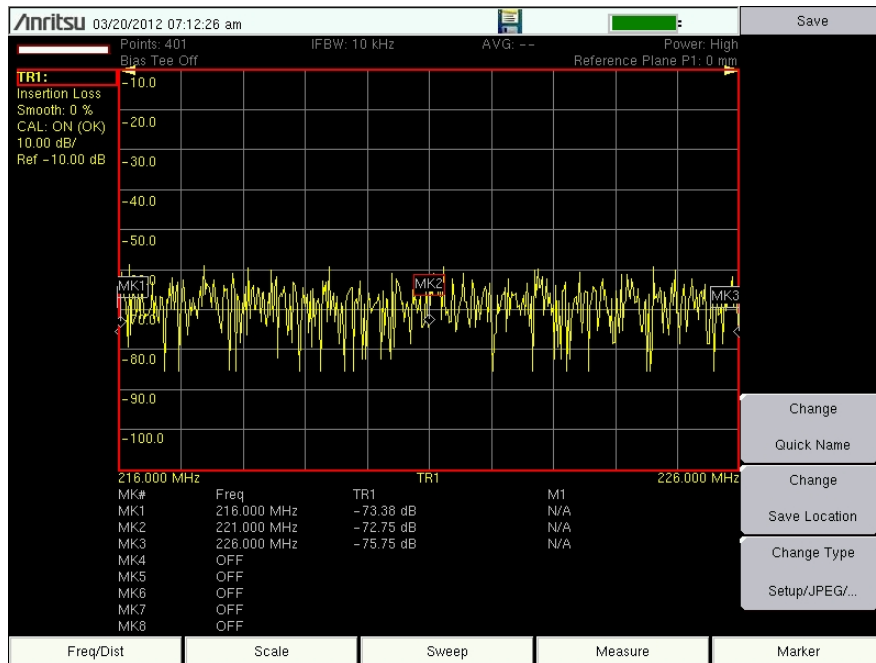
161 MHz Energy
TX 161 Antenna (Unfiltered)
RX 220 Antenna (Unfiltered)
Isolation: ~34 dB



Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

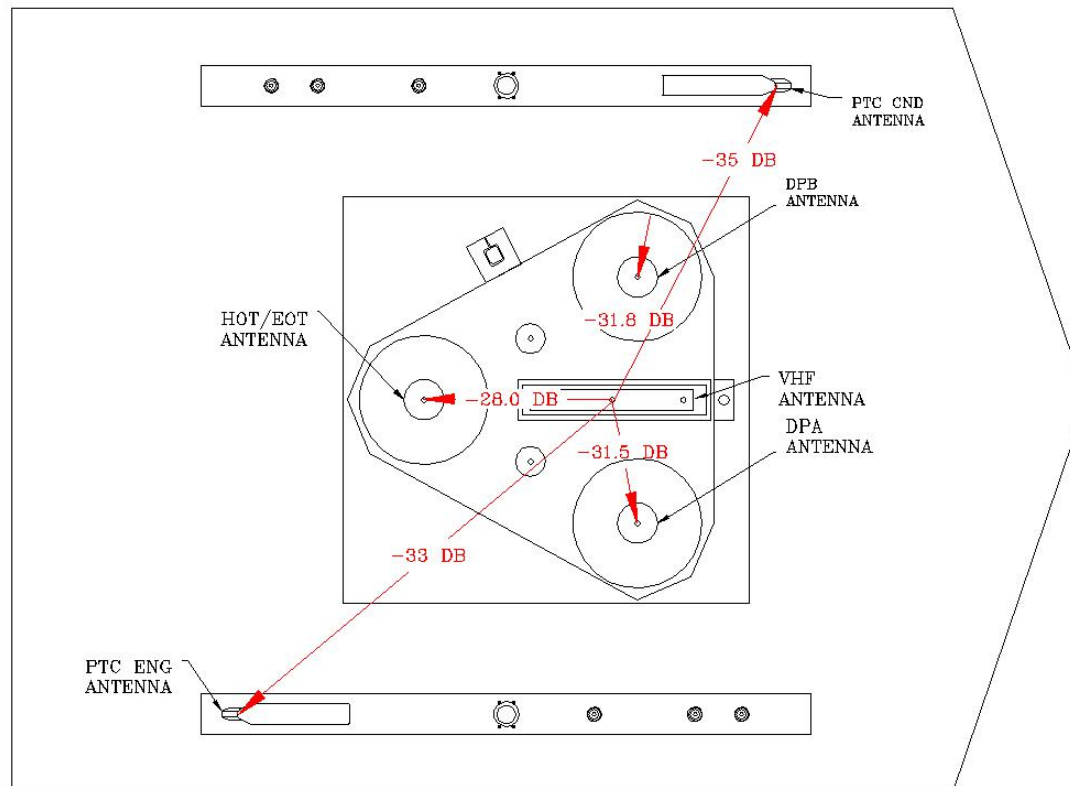
220 MHz Energy
TX 220 Antenna (Filtered)
RX 161 Antenna (Filtered)
Isolation: >60 dB (NF)

161 MHz Energy
TX 161 Antenna (Filtered)
RX 220 Antenna (Filtered)
Isolation: >60 dB (NF)



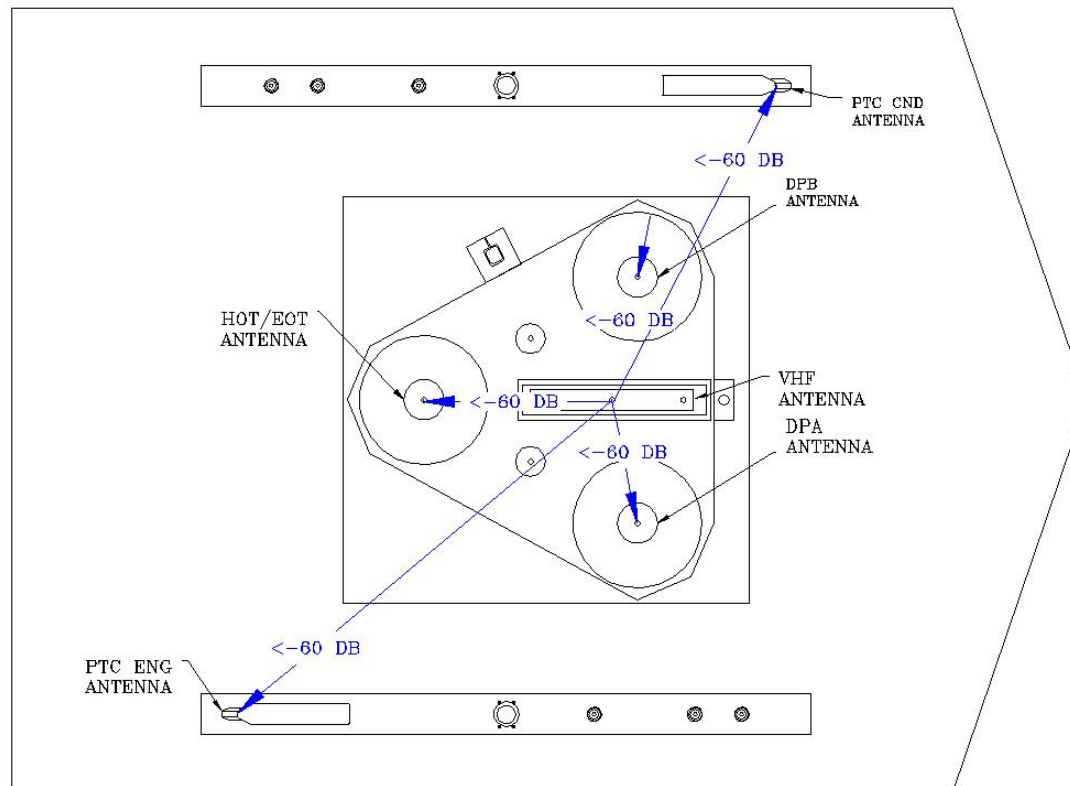
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

TX 161 Antenna (Unfiltered) Isolation Mapping TX Perspective



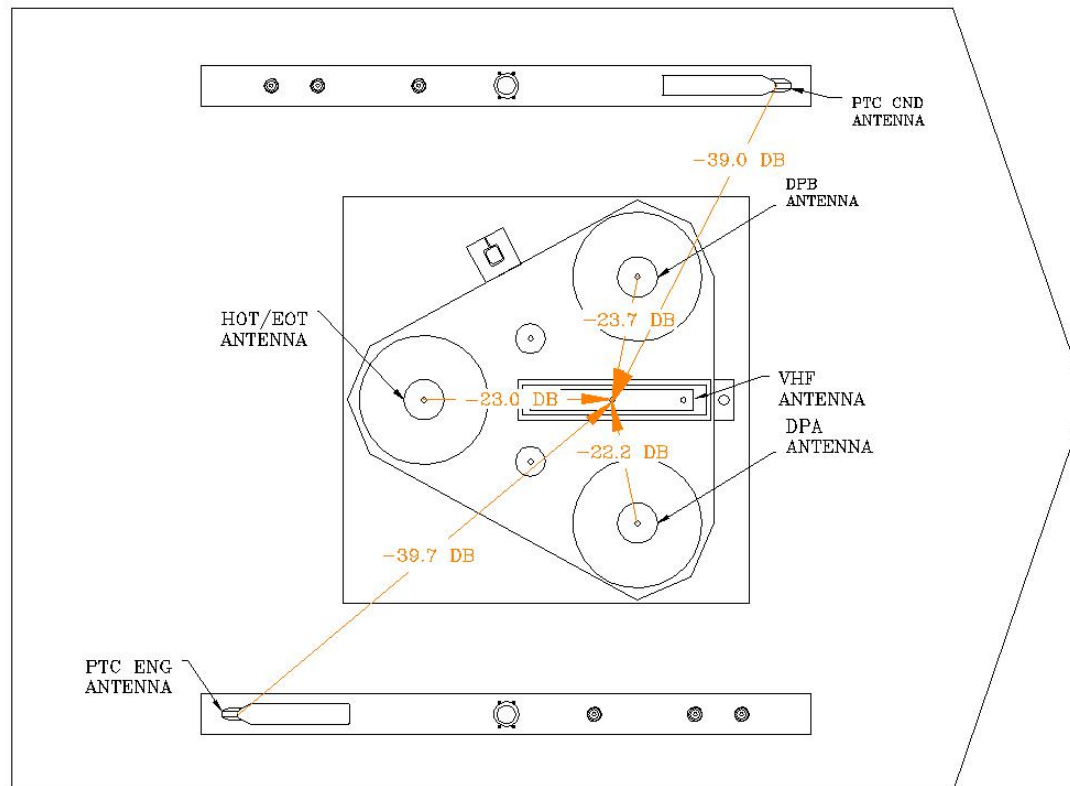
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

TX 161 Antenna (Filtered) Isolation Mapping TX Perspective



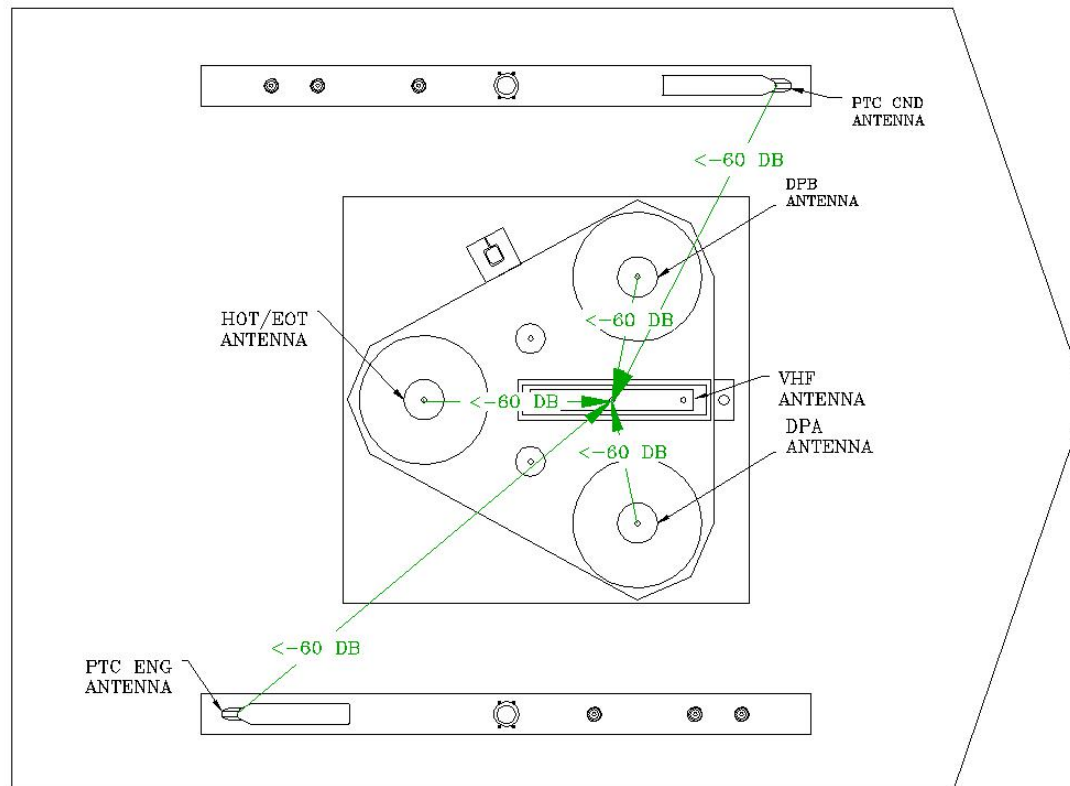
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

RX 161 Antenna (Unfiltered) Isolation Mapping RX Perspective



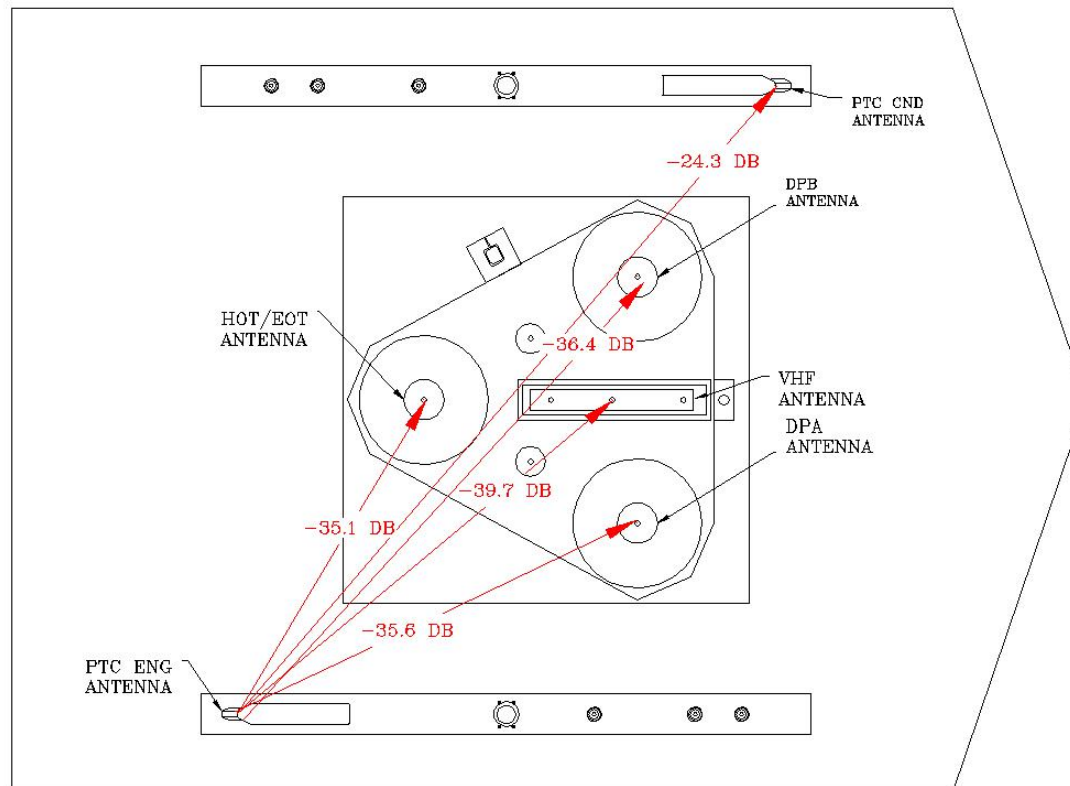
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

RX 161 Antenna (Filtered) Isolation Mapping RX Perspective



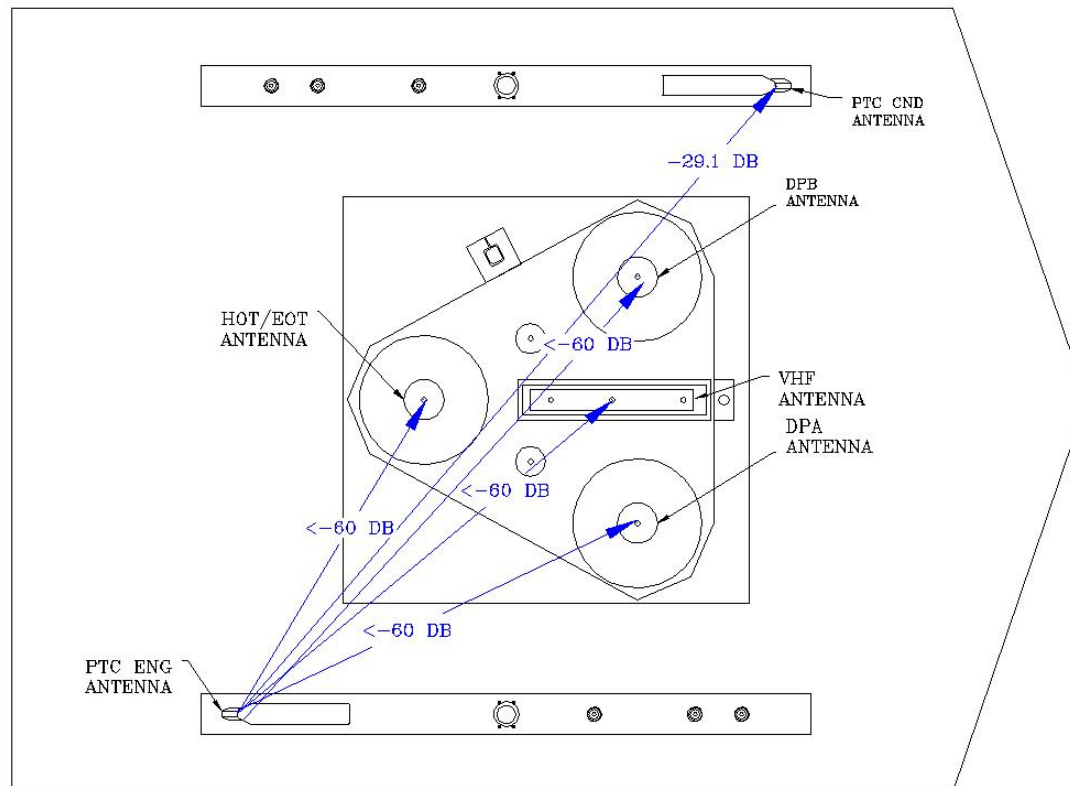
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

**TX 220 ENG Antenna (Unfiltered)
Isolation Mapping TX Perspective**



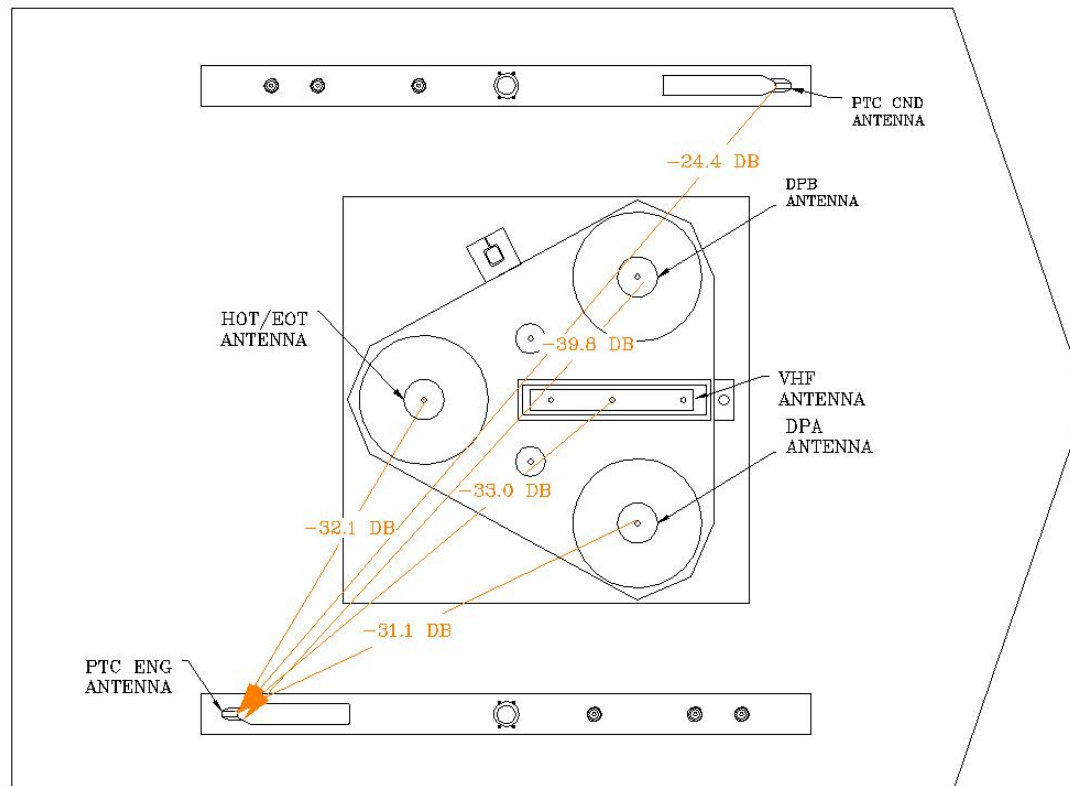
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

TX 220 ENG Antenna (Filtered) Isolation Mapping TX Perspective



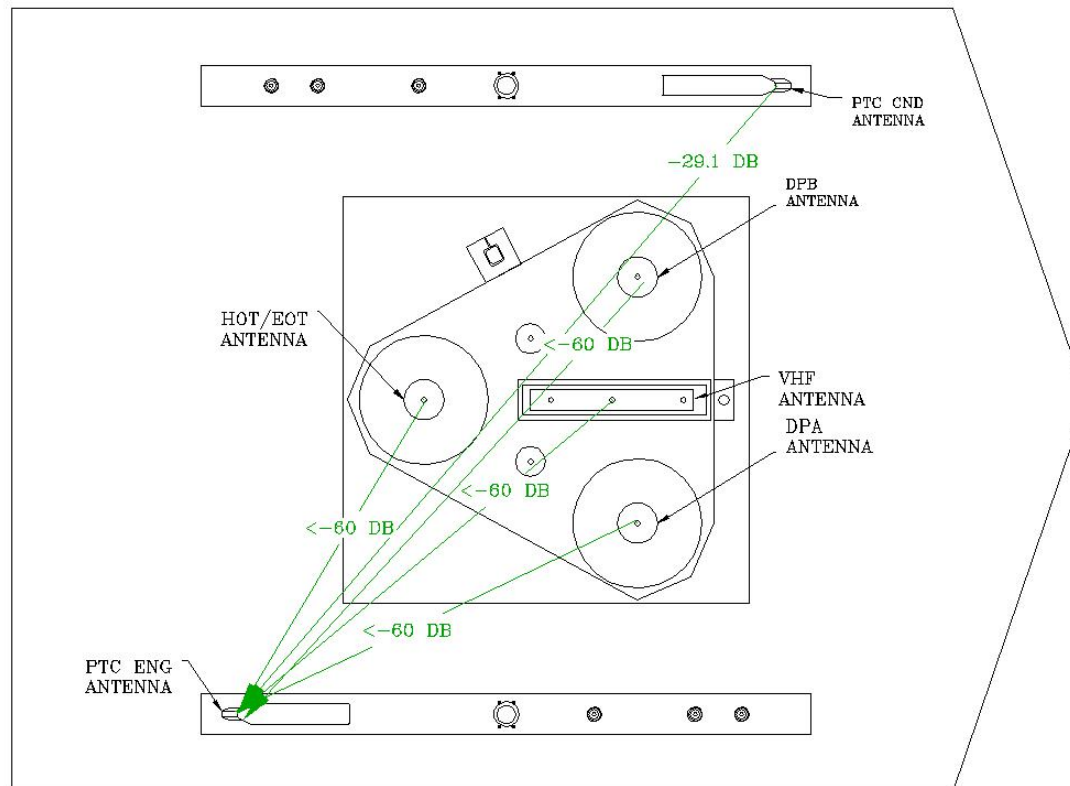
Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

RX 220 ENG Antenna (Unfiltered) Isolation Mapping RX Perspective



Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

RX 220 ENG Antenna (Filtered) Isolation Mapping RX Perspective



Radio Antenna Port to Radio Antenna Port Isolation

Test repeated for all Significant Contributors

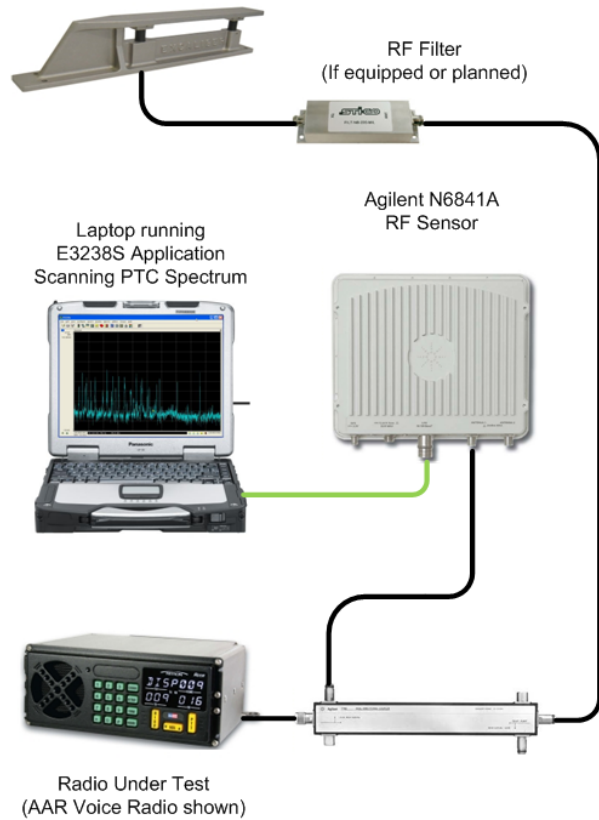
- VHF Voice (161 MHz)
- PTC-A (220 MHz)
- PTC-B (220 MHz)
- DP-A (450 MHz)
- DP-B (450 MHz)
- HOT/EOT (450 MHz)

Receive Intermodulation

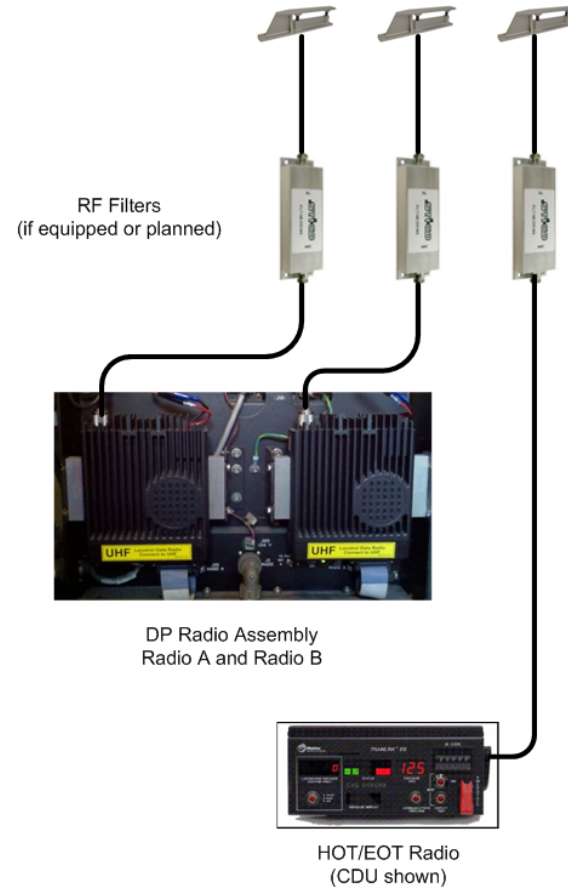
- Purpose of this Test
 - Spectrum of Interest 220 MHz
 - Quantify what, if any, undesired RF Energy will be Re-radiated from each Receiver Under Test
 - Quantify the impact of Filters on preventing, or, at least containing unwanted RF Re-radiation
 - Test is Executed without Filters, and with Filters for each of the High Power Radios Under Test (AAR Voice, HOT/EOT, DPA, DPB)

Receive Intermodulation

Locomotive Cab Rooftop Antenna As Equipped
(160 MHz unit shown)

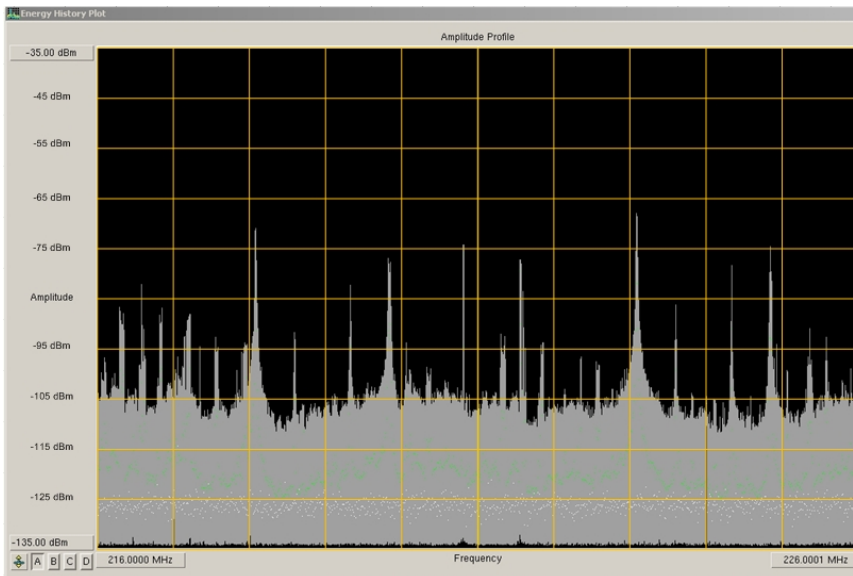


Locomotive Cab Rooftop Antennas As Equipped
(DPA, DPB, and HOT/EOT shown)

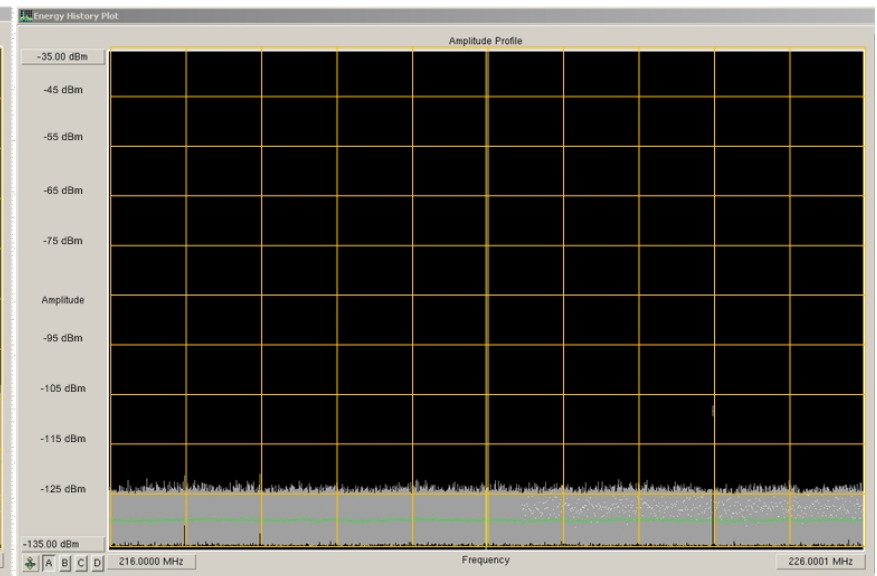


Receive Intermodulation

DPA RX: DPB TX , EOT TX, AAR Voice TX
(216 MHz to 226 MHz)



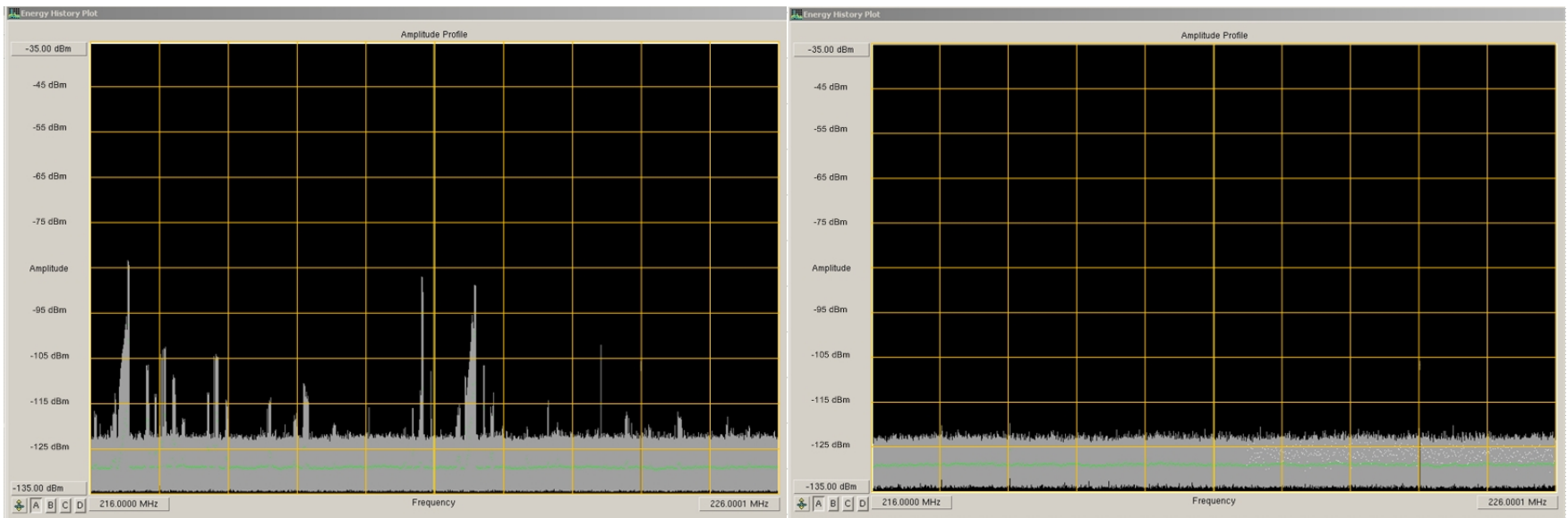
Brand "A" HOT/EOT Unfiltered



Brand "A" HOT/EOT Filtered

Receive Intermodulation

DPA RX: DPB TX , EOT TX, AAR Voice TX
(216 MHz to 226 MHz)



Brand "B" HOT/EOT Unfiltered

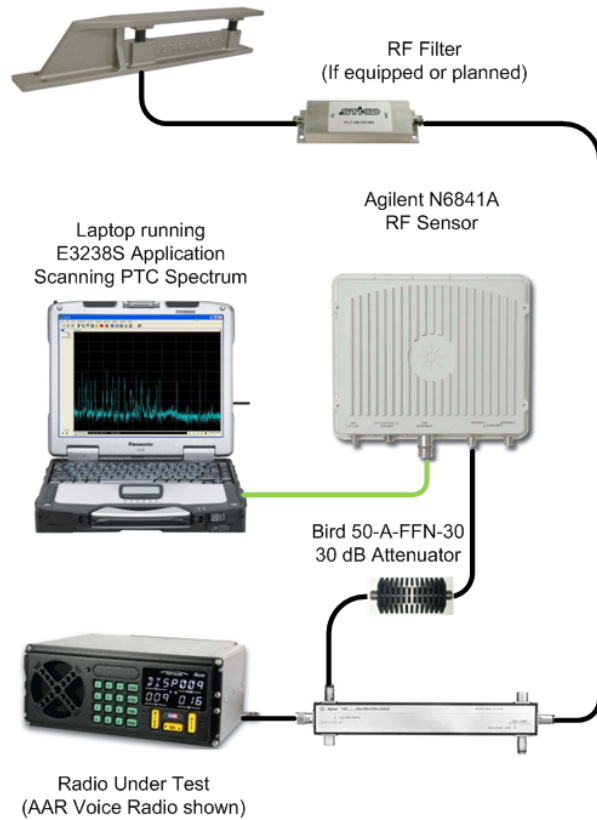
Brand "B" HOT/EOT Filtered

Transmit Intermodulation

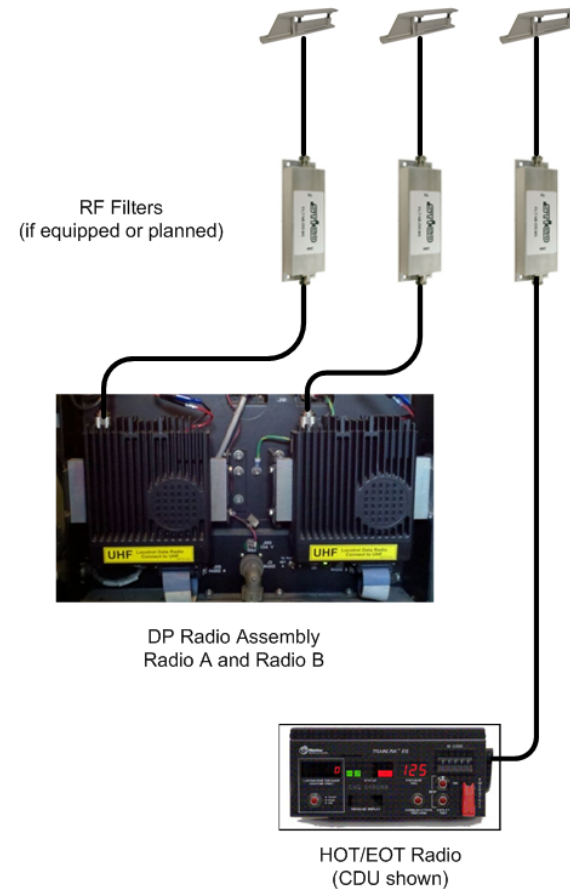
- Purpose of this Test
 - Spectrum of Interest 220 MHz
 - Quantify what, if any, undesired RF Energy will be Re-radiated from each Transmitter Under Test
 - Quantify the impact of Filters on preventing, or, at least containing unwanted RF Re-radiation
 - Test is Executed without Filters, and with Filters for each of the High Power Radios Under Test (AAR Voice, HOT/EOT, DPA, DPB)

Transmit Intermodulation

Locomotive Cab Rooftop Antenna As Equipped
(160 MHz unit shown)



Locomotive Cab Rooftop Antennas As Equipped
(DPA, DPB, and HOT/EOT shown)



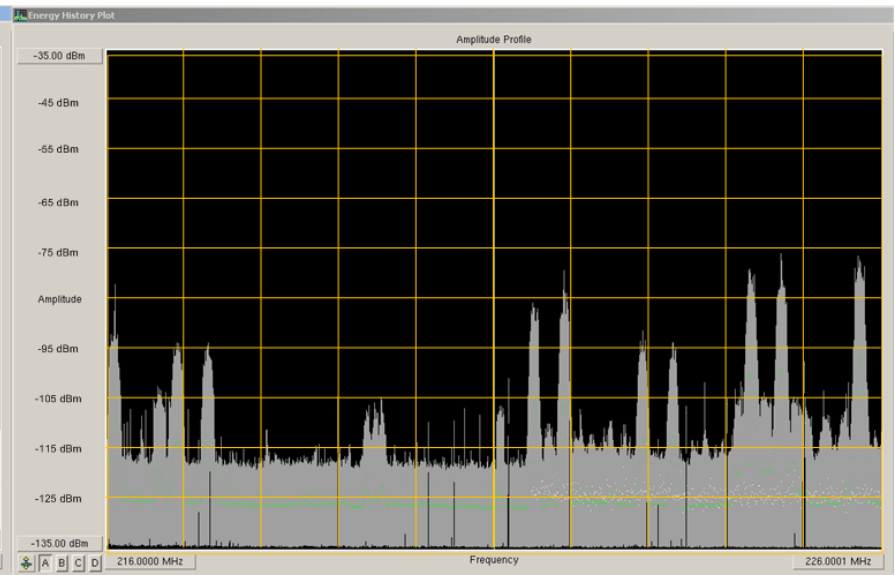
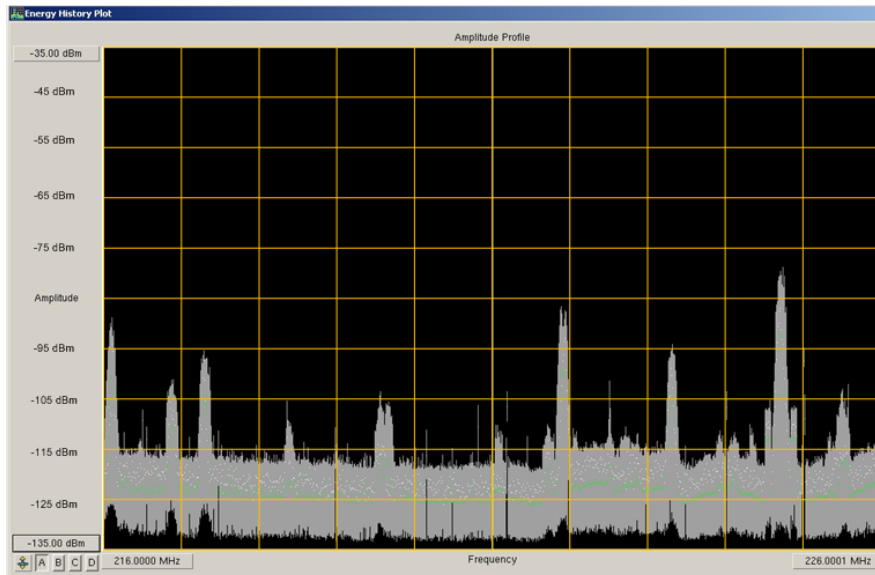
Transmit Intermodulation

- Unexpected Discovery
 - Off-Platform Signal Sources mixing in On-Platform Radio Equipment producing significant RF Energy in PTC 220 Spectrum
 - One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting produces multiple signals of significant Amplitude in the 220 MHz spectrum.
 - Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting produces twice as many signals of significant Amplitude in the 220 MHz spectrum.

Transmit Intermodulation

One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting
 produces multiple signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum

Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting
 produces twice as many signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum

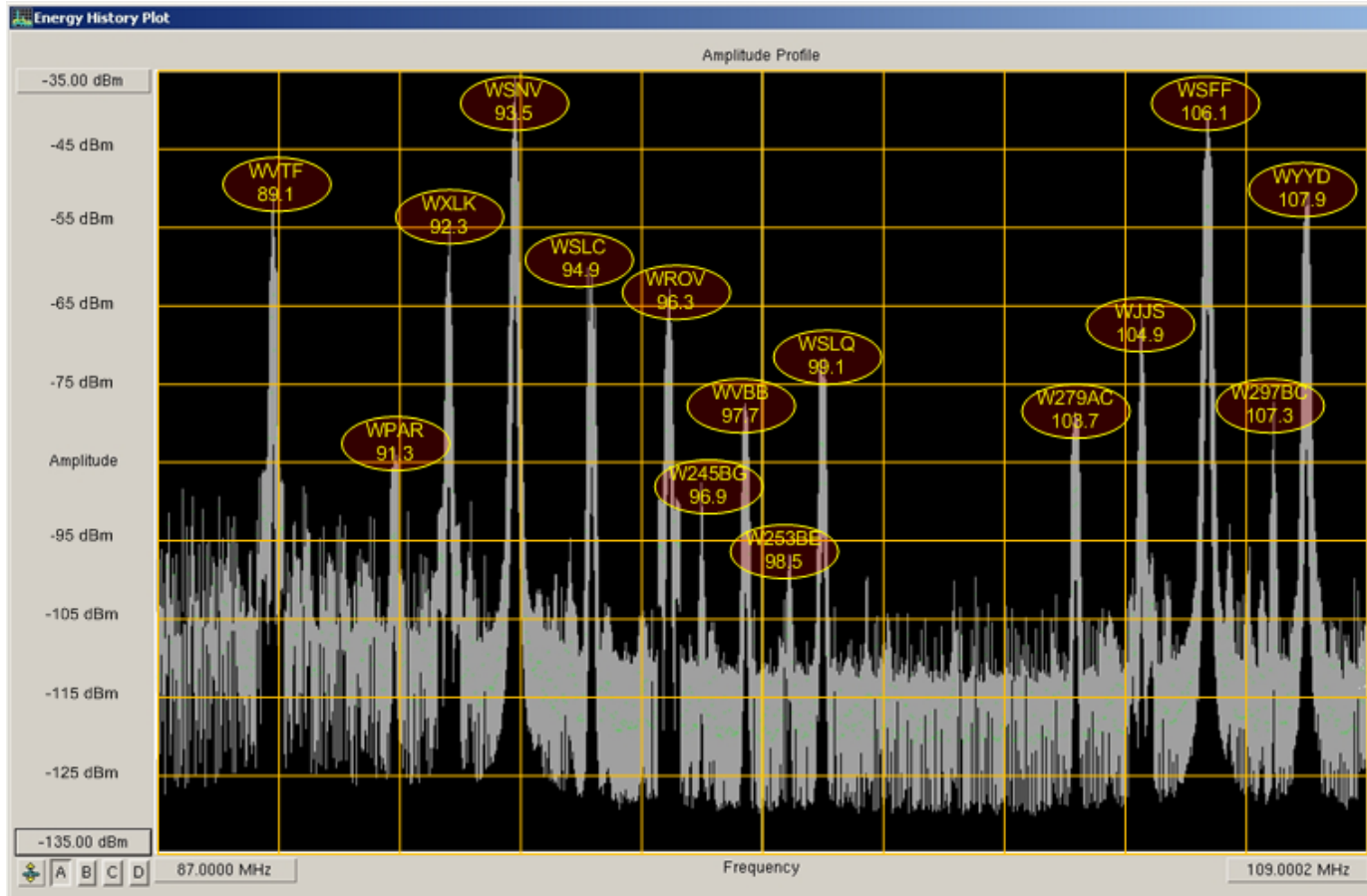


Transmit Intermodulation

- Unexpected Discovery
 - Signal Characteristics
 - Multiple signals 216 MHz to 226 MHz
 - About 150 kHz – 200 kHz wide
 - Analog—so can be demodulated
 - Demodulates to Broadcast Programming Audio
 - Broadcast Programming Audio matches Local FM Broadcasters
 - Fits the $2A-B=C$ relationship
 - (A--AAR VHF Voice)
 - (B--FM Broadcast)
 - (C--IMD Product)

Transmit Intermodulation

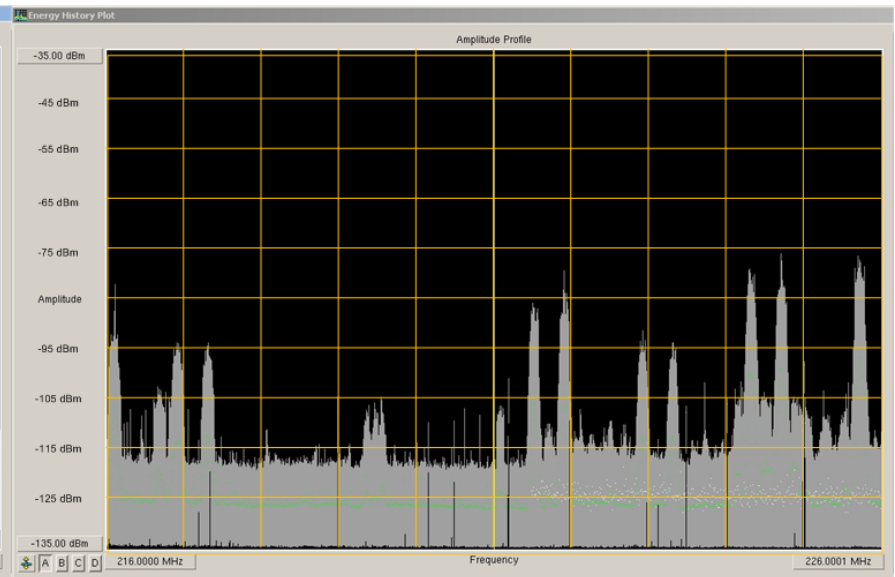
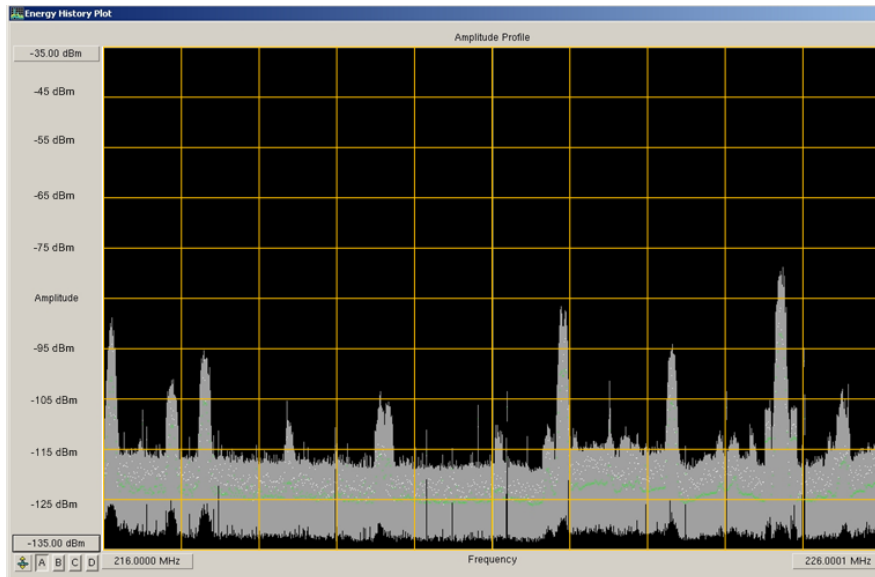
Some Exploration and Research of Local FM Broadcast Spectrum
(88.1 MHz to 107.9 MHz)



Transmit Intermodulation

One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting
 produces multiple signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum

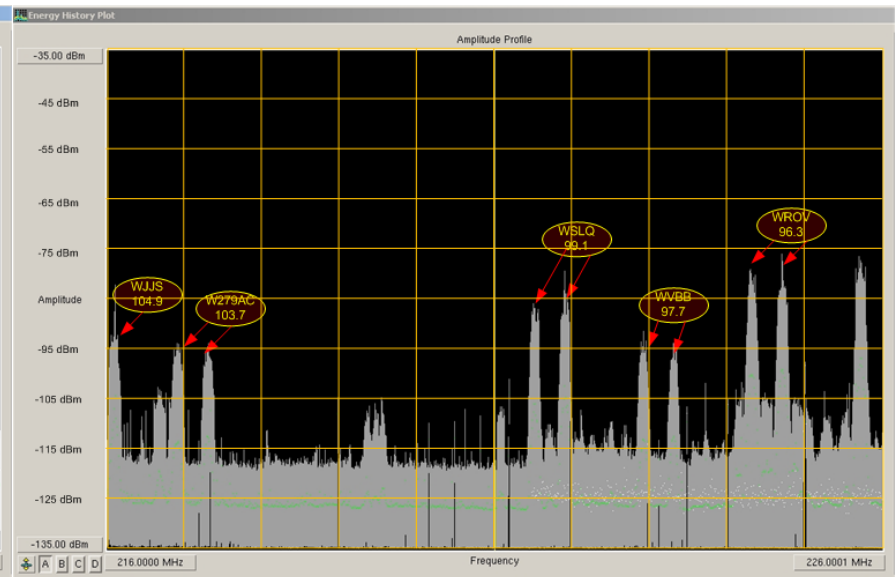
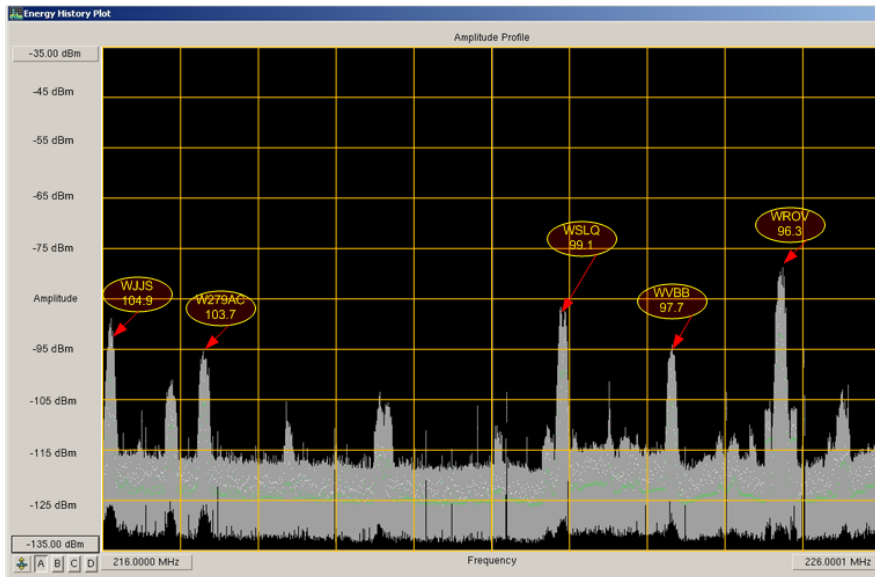
Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting
 produces twice as many signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum



Transmit Intermodulation

One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting produces multiple signals of significant Amplitude in the 220 MHz spectrum

Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting produces twice as many signals of significant Amplitude in the 220 MHz spectrum



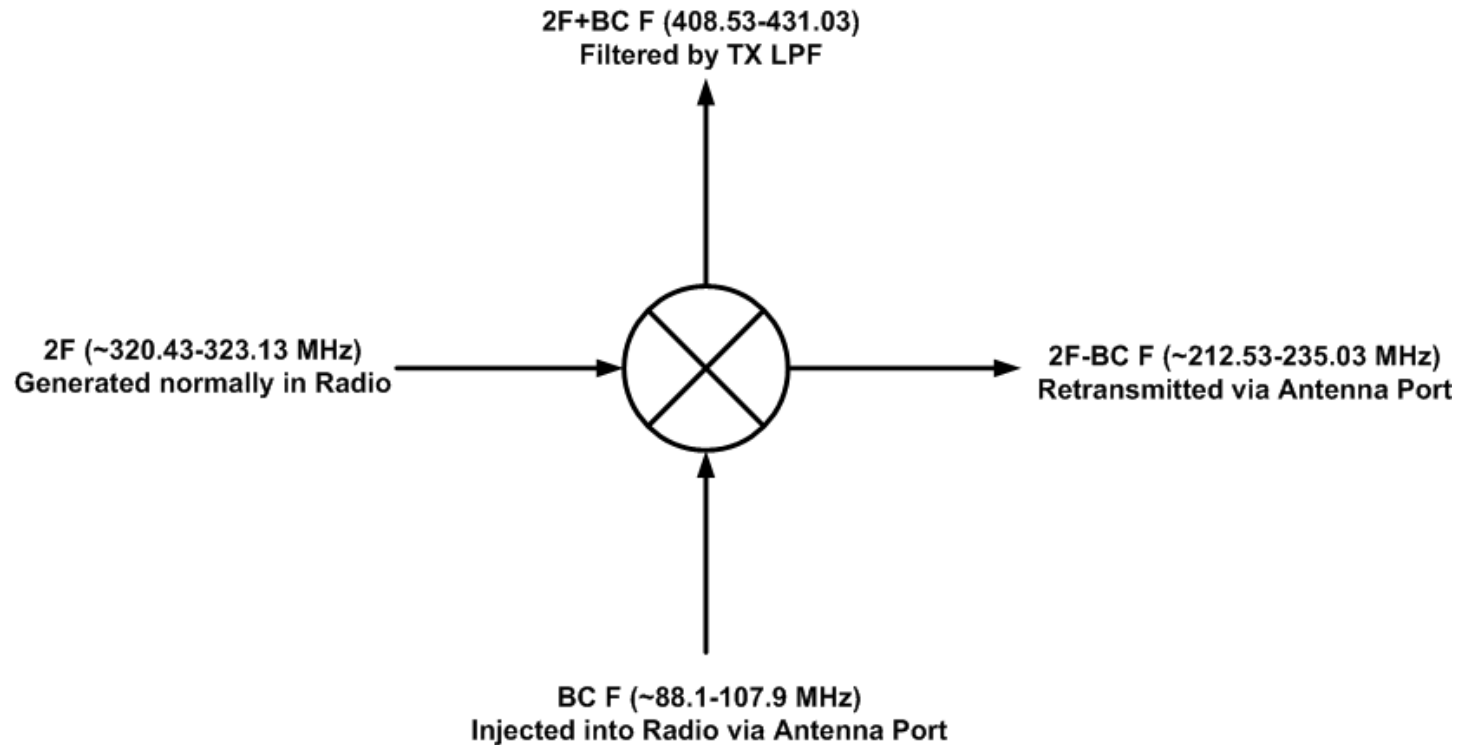
Transmit Intermodulation

Probable Mechanism of Intermodulation Generation

- **Most Land Mobile Radios, including the AAR Voice and Distributed Power Radios, employ a TX PA Design using a LPF for suppressing 2nd and 3rd Harmonic Frequencies.**
- **Since the purpose is to suppress Harmonic Frequencies, a LPF in lieu of a BPF is usually used for economic reasons**
- **The LPF must pass the high end of the Radio's Frequency Coverage Design—for most VHF LMR Radios, it must Pass 138 MHz to 174 MHz**
- **The LPF usually has a cutoff somewhere near the 2nd Harmonic Frequency—for the AAR Voice Radio, it is probably in the range of 250 MHz to 300 MHz**
- **Nothing in the LPF design inhibits RF Energy ingress at Broadcast Frequencies 88.1 MHz to 107.9 MHz**
- **The LPF appears to pass RF Energy up to at least 226 MHz quite efficiently**

Transmit Intermodulation

Probable Mechanism of Intermodulation Generation



Transmit Intermodulation

Part 90 Current PTC 220 Spectrum Available

Requires no Regulatory Change to Acquire

Part 80 Current AMTS Spectrum under consideration for PTC use

Requires Regulatory Change to Acquire

Part 97 Current Amateur 220 Spectrum

Rail Industry may receive Interference Complaints requiring Mitigation Efforts

IRAC US Government Agencies and Military Spectrum

Rail Industry may receive Interference Complaints requiring Mitigation Efforts

Part 73 Broadcast Television (VHF TV Channel 13)

Rail Industry may receive Interference Complaints requiring Mitigation Efforts

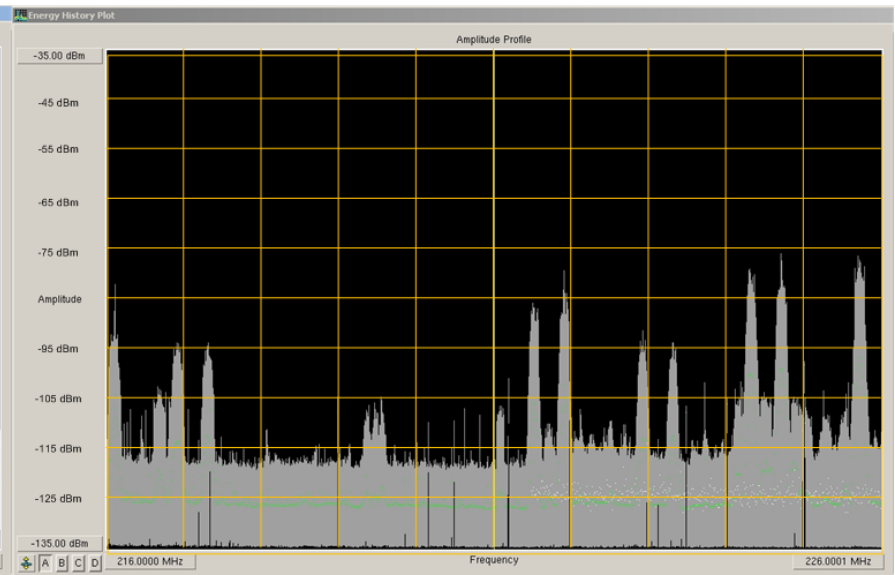
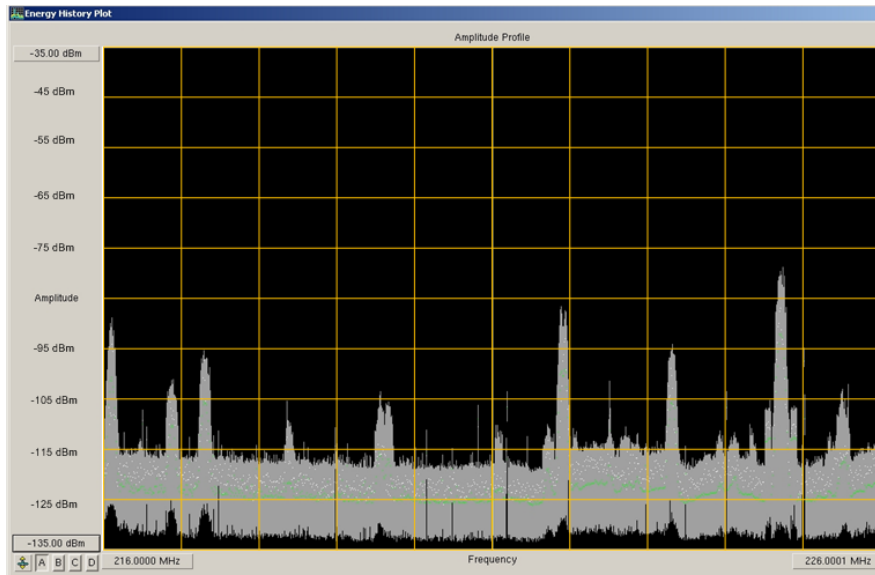
IRAC SPASUR RADAR Tracks Orbital Objects and Re-Entry Debris

Rail Industry may receive Interference Complaints requiring Mitigation Efforts

Transmit Intermodulation

One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting
 produces multiple signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum

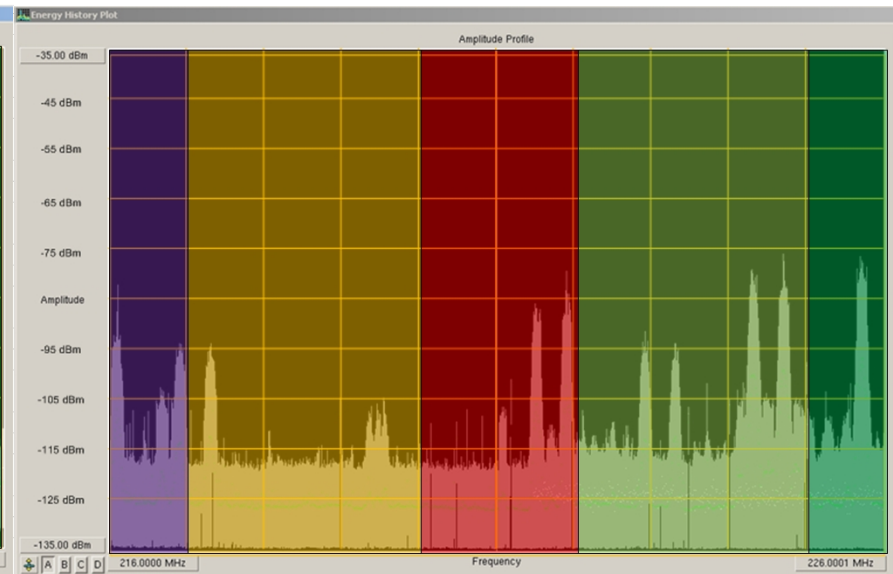
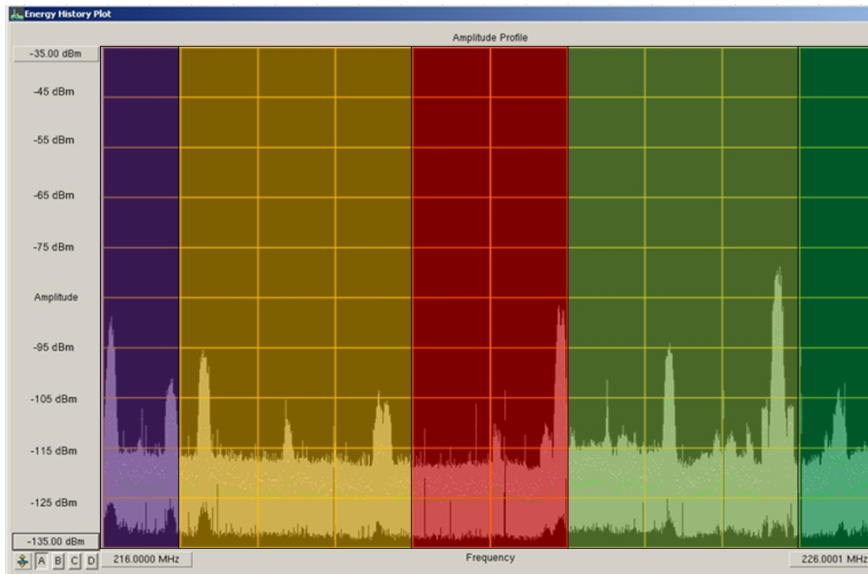
Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting
 produces twice as many signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum



Transmit Intermodulation

One AAR Voice Channel Transmitting
 produces multiple signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum

Two AAR Voice Channels Transmitting
 produces twice as many signals of
 significant Amplitude in
 the 220 MHz spectrum



Transmit Intermodulation

Possible Mitigation

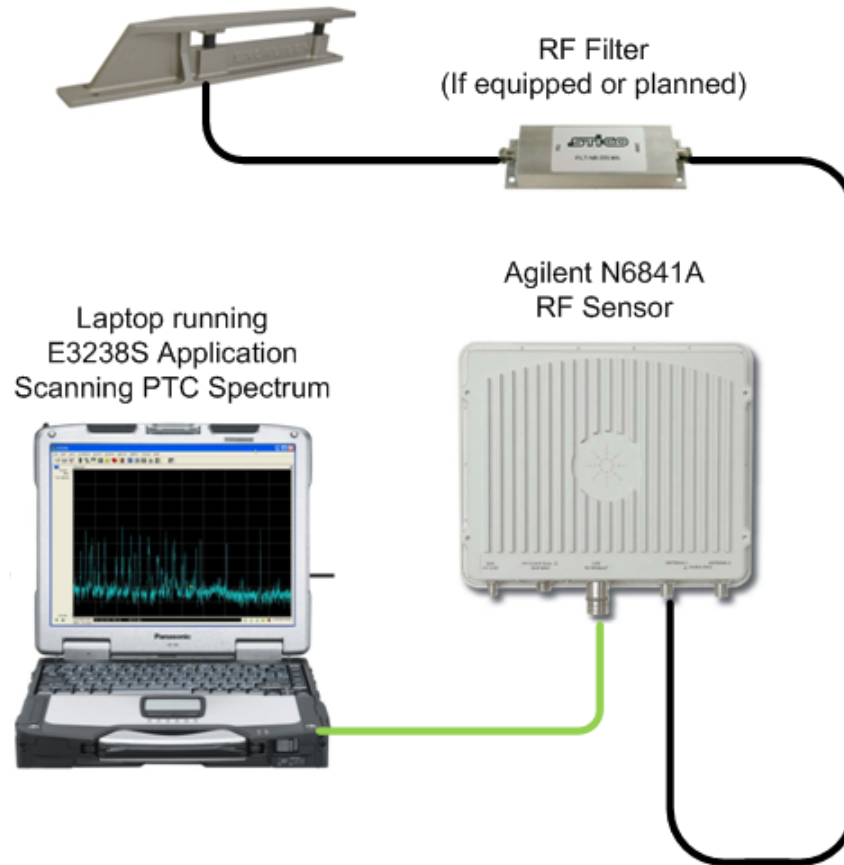
- Filter all VHF Base Stations, Control Stations, Repeaters, and Mobiles for FM Broadcast Rejection—may not stop very strong FM Broadcast Signals ingressing through points other than the Antenna Port
- May require additional mitigation on Radio RF Deck cases (such as finger-stock or braid)—requires subject matter expertise and possibly expensive
- Filtering of Portables is physically unwieldy, and subject to frequent damage—mitigation may require Operational Changes
- Coordinate PTC 220 channels with AAR VHF Voice Channels against existing proximal FM Broadcasters—difficult in Congested Areas—and does not address Interference to other Radio Services
- Deploy PTC 220 Base Stations in Yards—may require WSRS for Waysides outside of the yard to Mitigate Blocking—and does not address Interference to other Radio Services

Electro-Mechanical EMI

- Purpose of this Test
 - Spectrum of Interest 220 MHz
 - Characterize any Electromagnetic Energy Generated by On-Platform Locomotive Electro-Mechanical Equipment
 - Twelve Locomotive Operational States Tested
 - Engine Off, Startup Sequence, Idle, Static Load Notches 1 through 8, Shutdown Sequence
 - Domains Quantified
 - Frequency
 - Amplitude
 - Duration
 - Bandwidth

Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Cab Rooftop Antenna As Equipped
For PTC 220 MHz

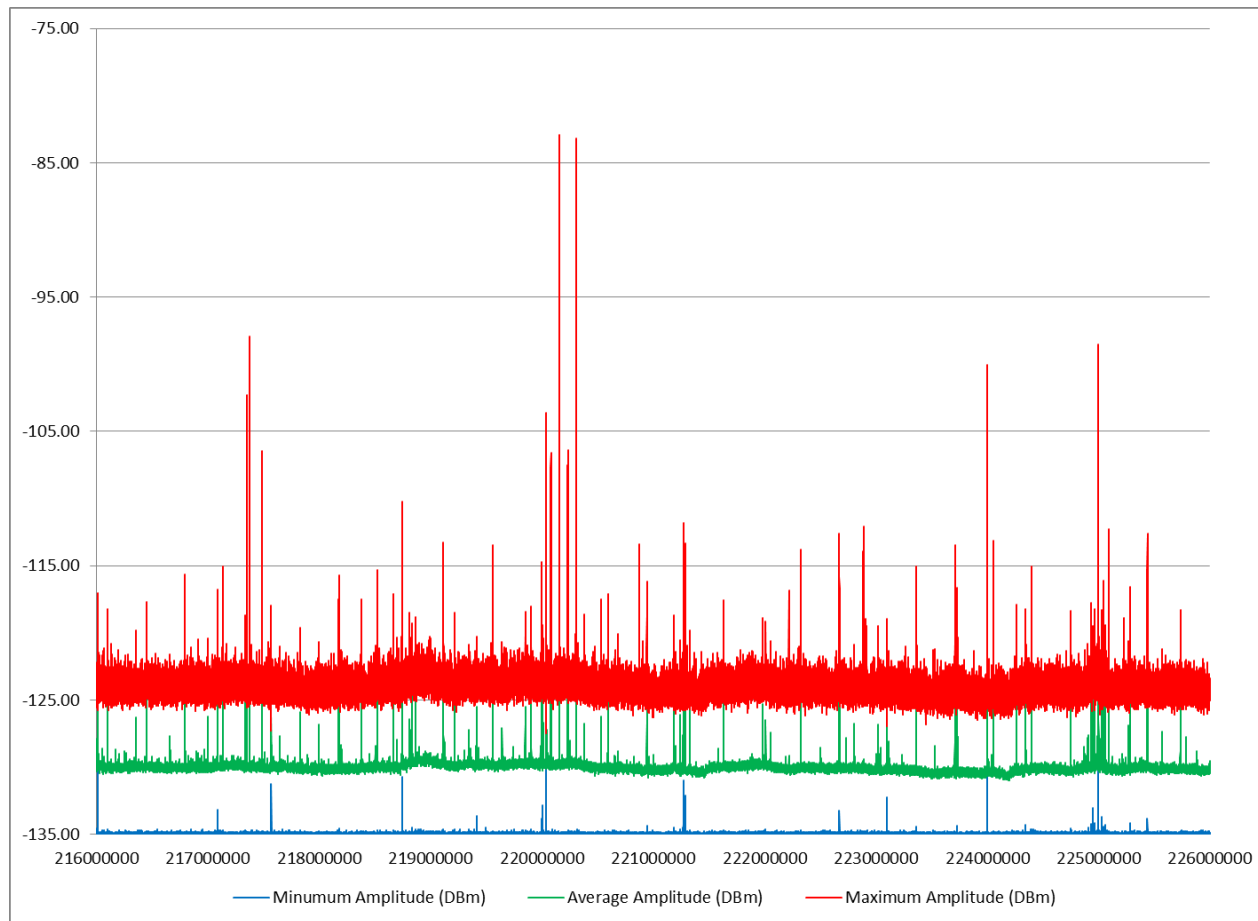


Electro-Mechanical EMI

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
	Frequency	Bandwidth	Number Sweeps	Intercepts	Detections	Minumum Amplitude (DBm)	Average Amplitude (DBm)	Maximium Amplitude (DBm)	Minimum Bandwidth	Average Bandwidth	Maximum Bandwidth	Minimum Duration	Average Duration	Maximum Duration	Percent Occupancy
1															
2	216000214	214	1314	85	10.00	-131.57	-125.99	-120.80	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.06	6.5%
3	216000427	214	1341	254	29.00	-131.92	-126.97	-120.89	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.27	18.9%
4	216000641	214	1334	330	60.00	-131.98	-126.83	-121.90	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.30	24.7%
5	216000855	214	1339	288	48.00	-131.80	-127.21	-121.00	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.20	21.5%
6	216001068	214	1341	190	23.00	-131.98	-126.77	-121.79	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.23	14.2%
7	216001282	214	1342	545	131.00	-131.94	-124.90	-119.33	213.62	214.01	427.25	0.05	0.02	0.38	40.6%
8	216001495	214	1340	420	92.00	-131.87	-125.24	-119.77	213.62	214.13	427.25	0.05	0.02	0.20	31.3%
9	216001709	214	1334	174	16.00	-131.86	-126.68	-120.89	213.62	214.85	427.25	0.05	0.00	0.11	13.0%
10	216001923	214	1342	361	71.00	-131.98	-126.29	-120.77	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.02	1.45	26.9%
11	216002136	214	1336	406	82.00	-131.95	-125.97	-119.31	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.25	30.4%
12	216002350	214	1342	252	39.00	-131.94	-126.71	-121.37	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.11	18.8%
13	216002564	214	1329	262	41.00	-131.98	-127.02	-122.01	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.16	19.7%
14	216002777	214	1341	329	59.00	-131.98	-125.90	-119.16	213.62	214.27	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.16	24.5%
15	216002991	214	1338	463	102.00	-131.92	-125.54	-119.63	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.02	0.27	34.6%
16	216003204	214	1340	307	59.00	-131.84	-125.81	-120.77	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.16	22.9%
17	216003418	214	1342	305	48.00	-131.71	-126.40	-119.80	213.62	214.32	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.16	22.7%
18	216003632	214	1341	301	53.00	-131.80	-126.54	-120.70	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.20	22.4%
19	216003845	214	1337	289	56.00	-131.98	-127.10	-120.43	213.62	214.36	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.22	21.6%
20	216004059	214	1336	308	58.00	-131.97	-127.08	-122.06	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.27	23.1%
21	216004273	214	1338	298	53.00	-131.98	-126.85	-120.96	213.62	214.34	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.20	22.3%
22	216004486	214	1339	332	65.00	-131.80	-127.04	-121.12	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.33	24.8%
23	216004700	214	1341	381	75.00	-131.98	-126.40	-121.15	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.02	0.23	28.4%
24	216004913	214	1335	277	44.00	-131.97	-127.08	-120.32	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.11	20.7%
25	216005127	214	1337	296	49.00	-131.98	-127.02	-121.40	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.22	22.1%
26	216005341	214	1341	327	65.00	-131.97	-127.02	-119.80	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.16	24.4%
27	216005554	214	1342	293	52.00	-131.98	-126.89	-121.16	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.20	21.8%
28	216005768	214	1335	311	56.00	-131.87	-127.15	-121.00	213.62	214.31	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.11	23.3%
29	216005981	214	1338	293	54.00	-131.98	-126.86	-120.96	213.62	214.35	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.13	21.9%
30	216006195	214	1342	312	59.00	-131.97	-126.99	-120.94	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.02	1.45	23.2%
31	216006409	214	1338	302	55.00	-131.98	-127.35	-122.10	213.62	214.33	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.16	22.6%
32	216006622	214	1342	322	60.00	-131.98	-127.00	-121.25	213.62	214.29	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.25	24.0%
33	216006836	214	1339	296	49.00	-131.92	-127.08	-122.56	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.25	22.1%
34	216007050	214	1341	325	63.00	-131.97	-127.04	-121.10	213.62	214.94	427.25	0.05	0.01	0.23	24.2%
35	216007263	214	1336	313	64.00	-131.98	-127.22	-121.77	213.62	213.62	213.62	0.05	0.01	0.31	23.4%

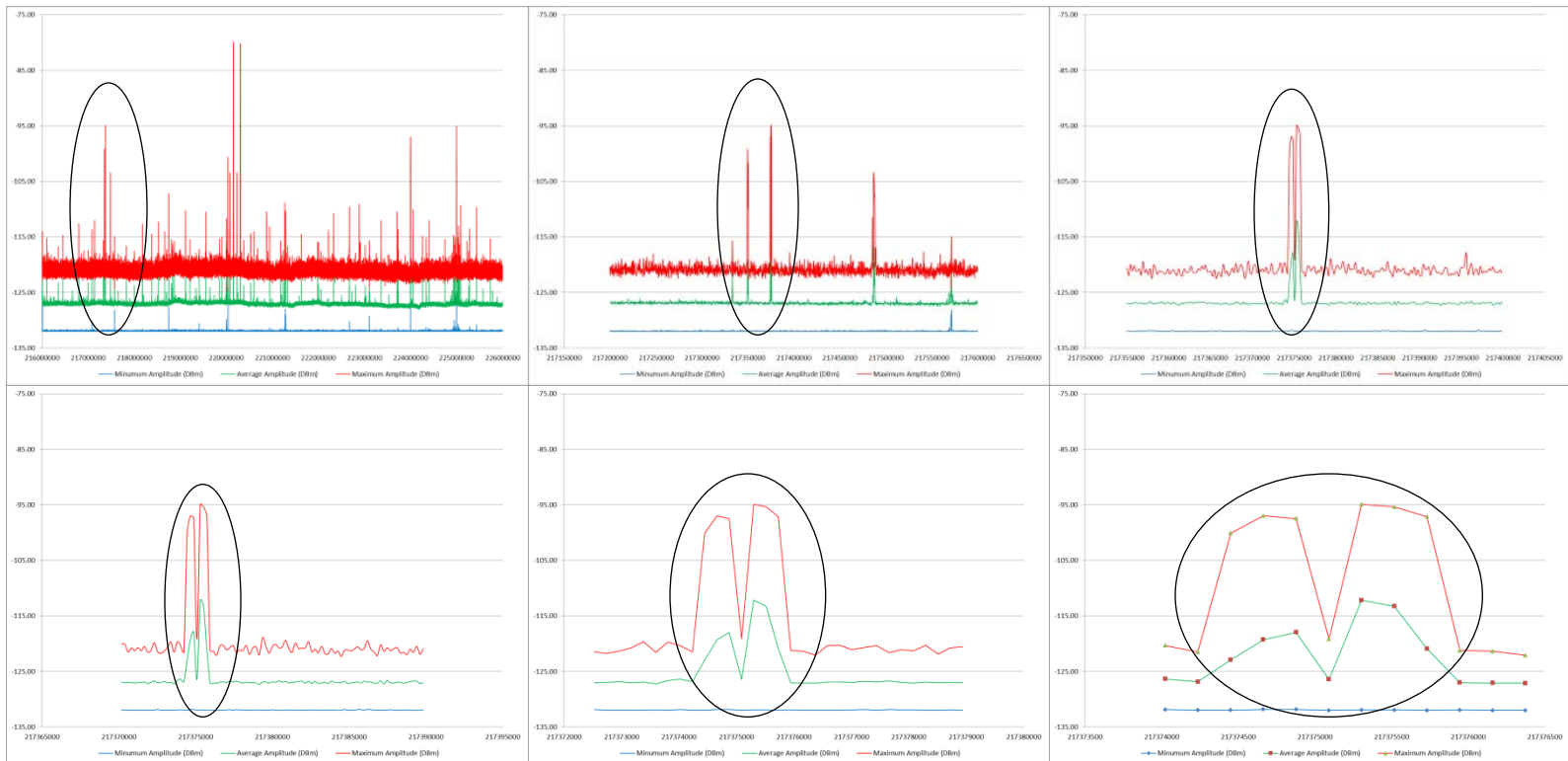
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Sample Amplitude Profile Chart



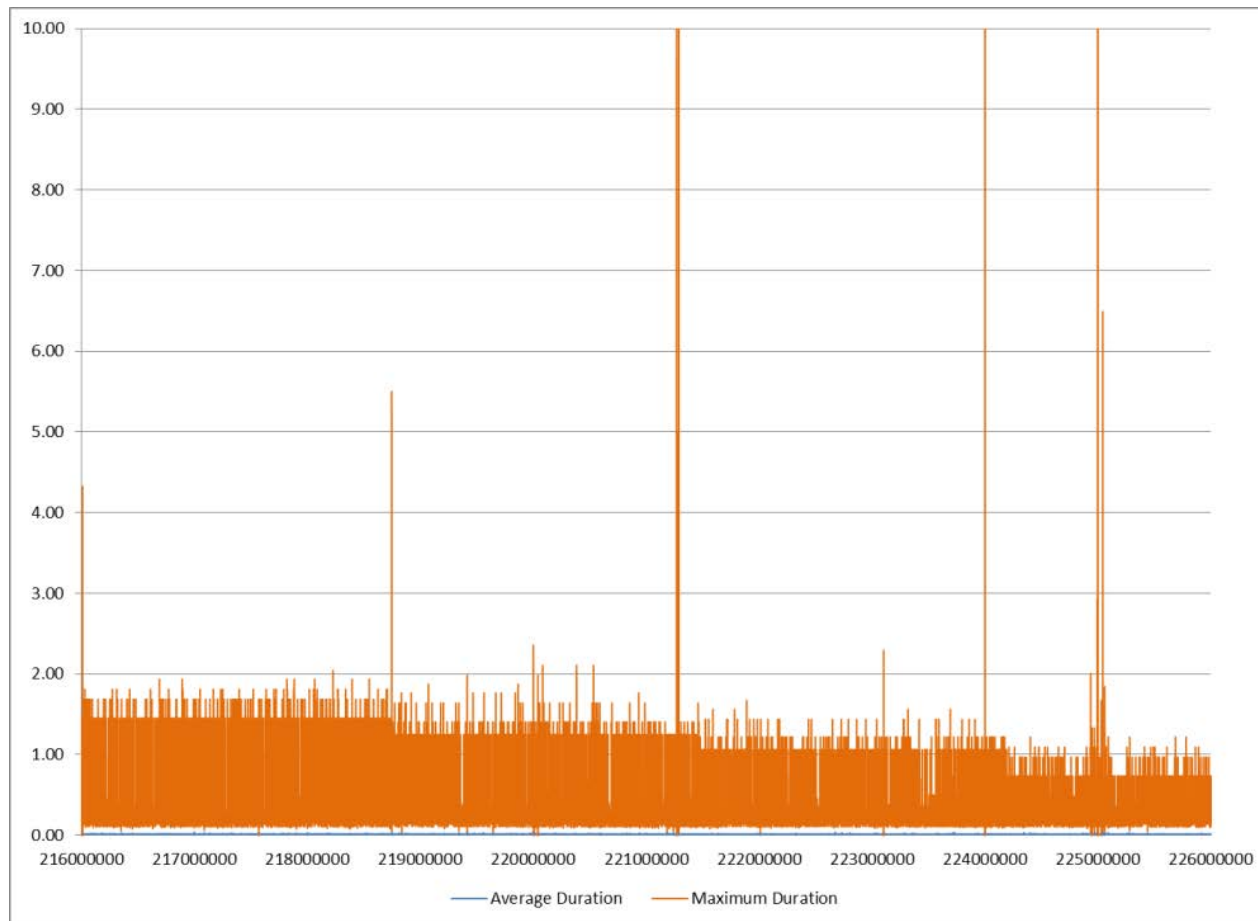
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Interpreting the Data Chart



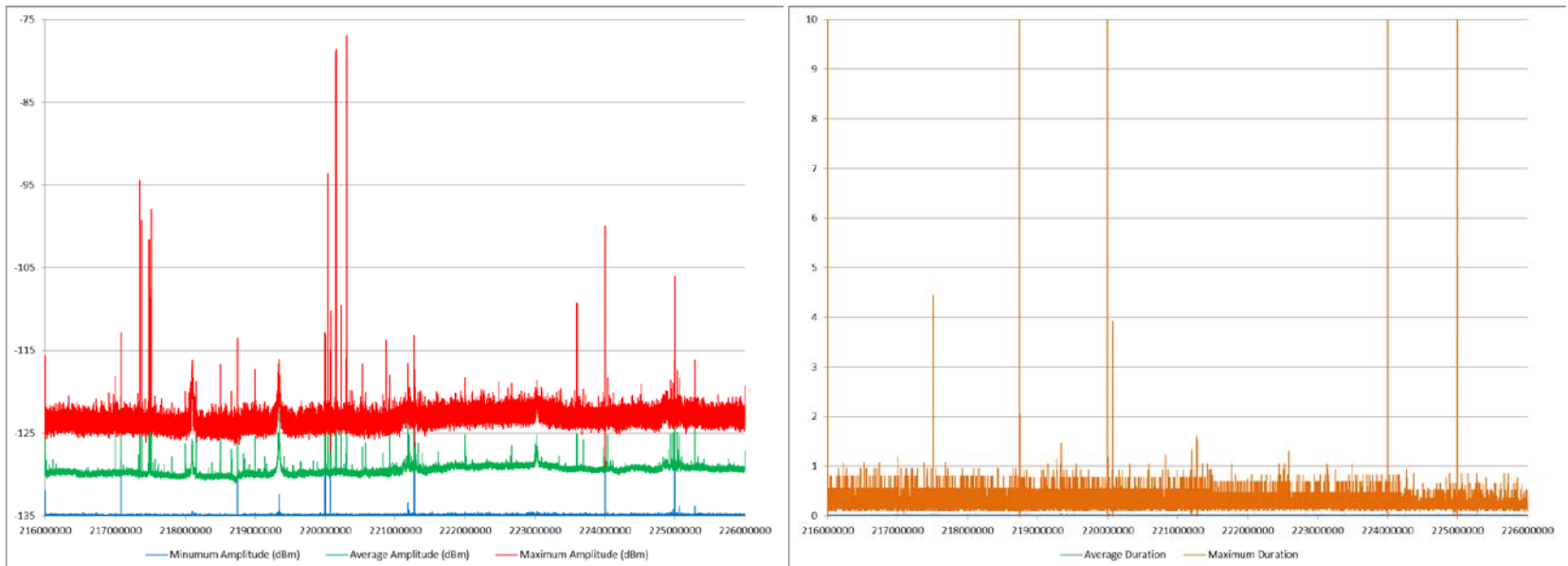
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Sample Duration Profile Chart



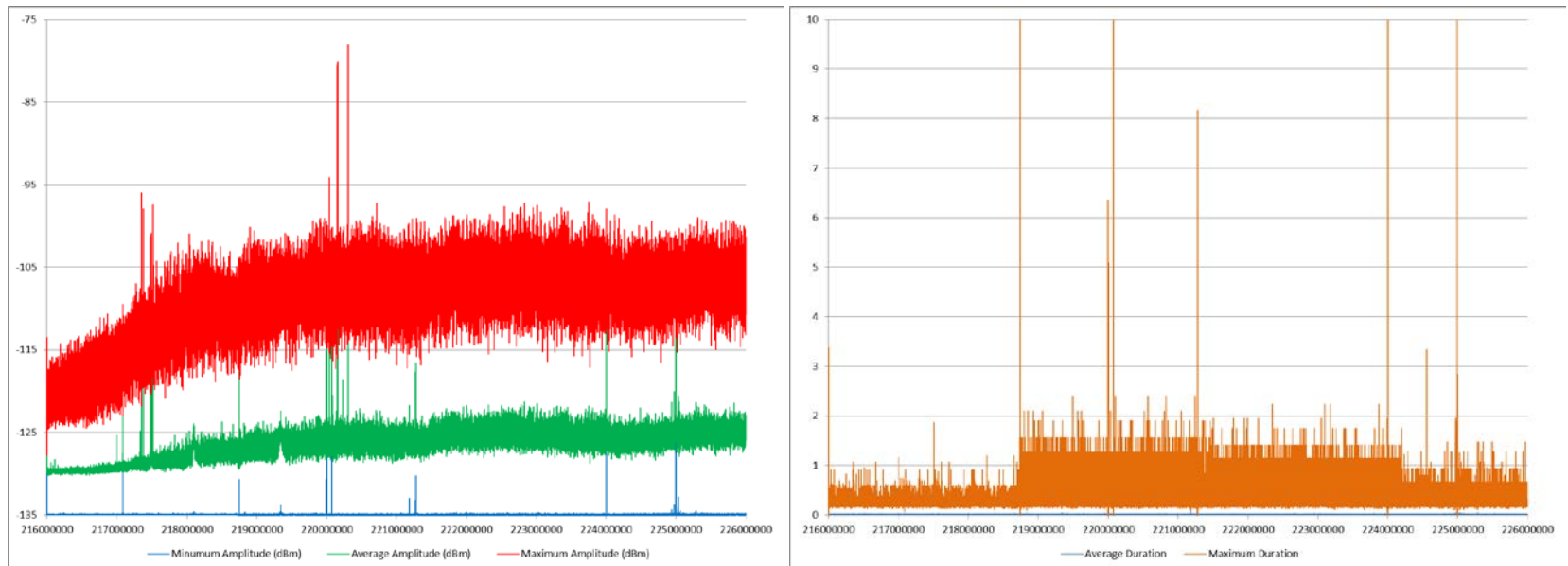
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Engine Off



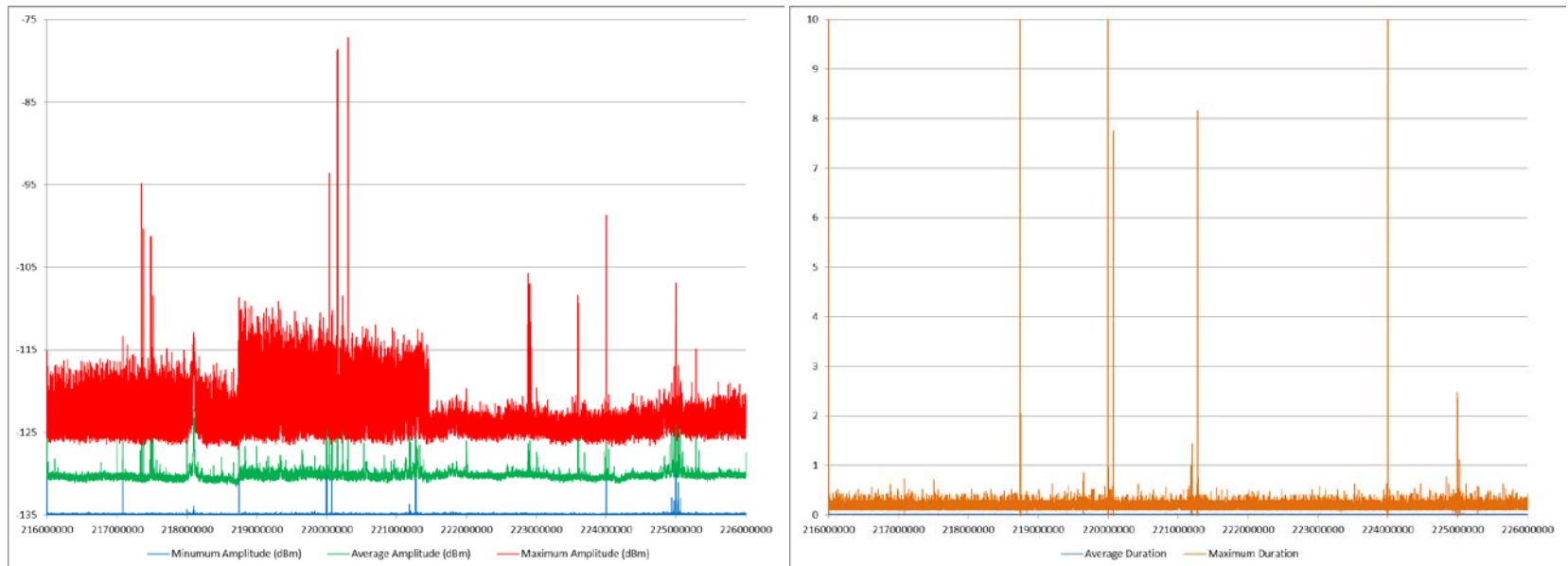
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Startup Sequence



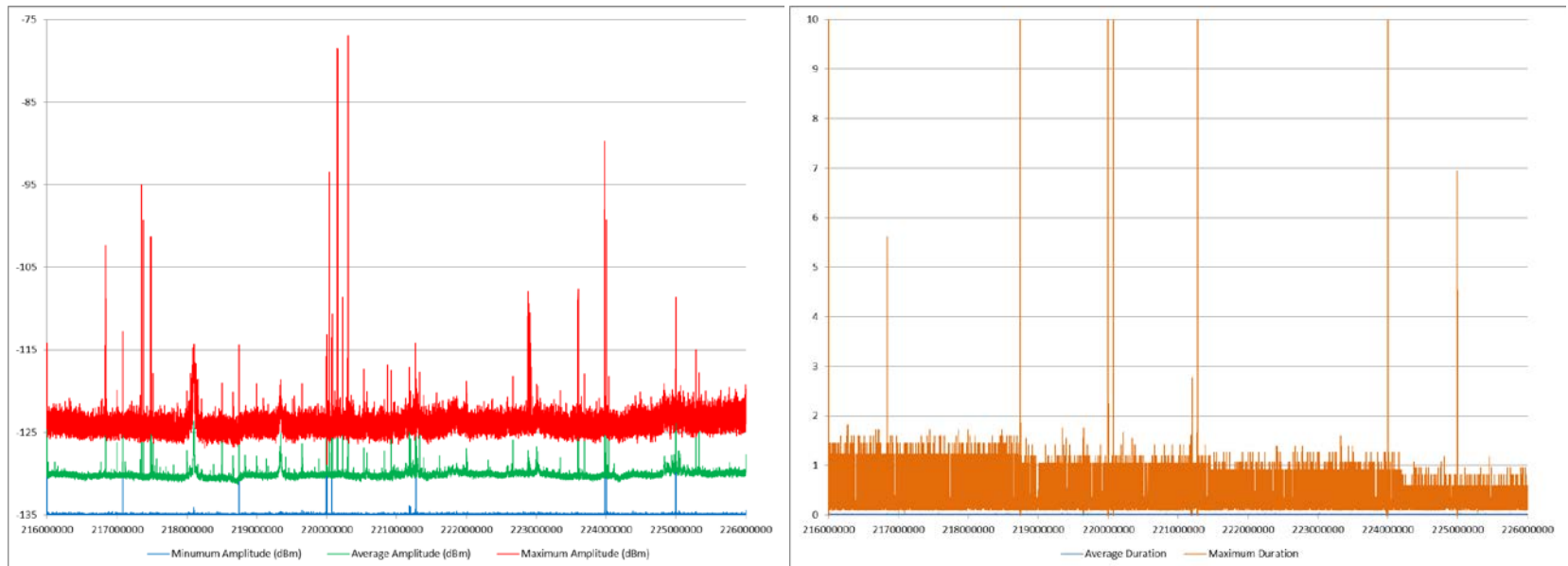
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Idle



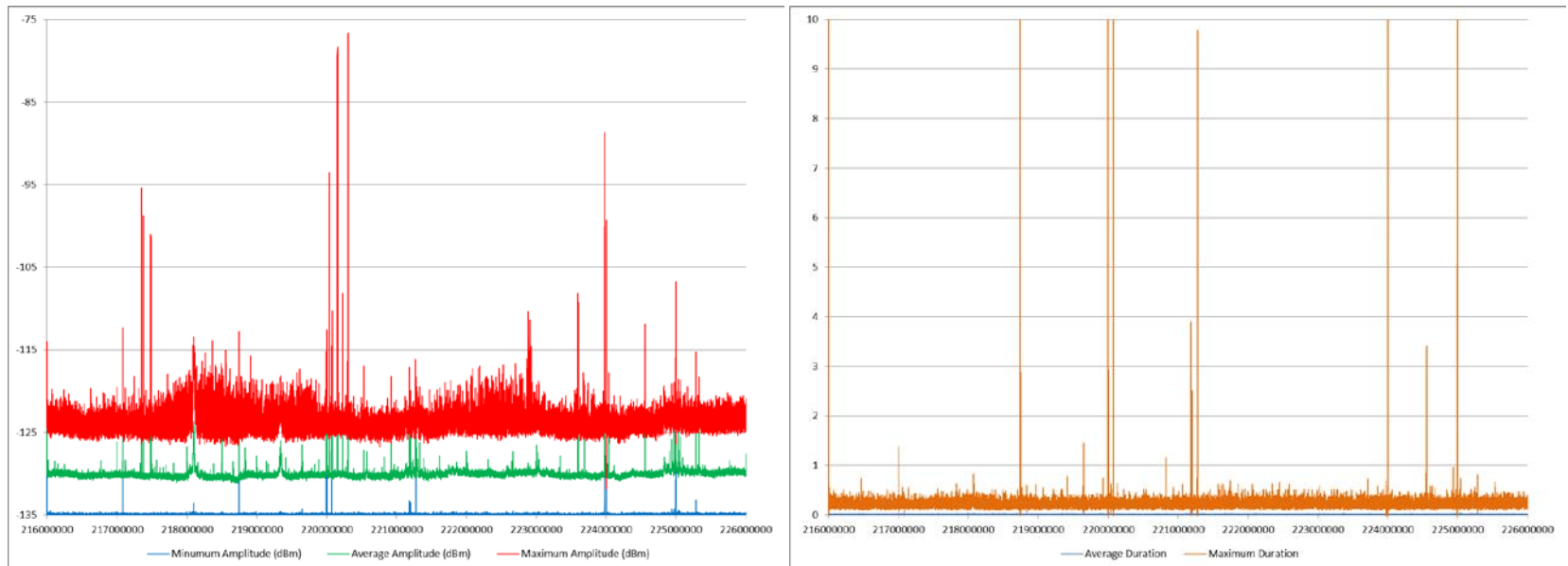
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 1



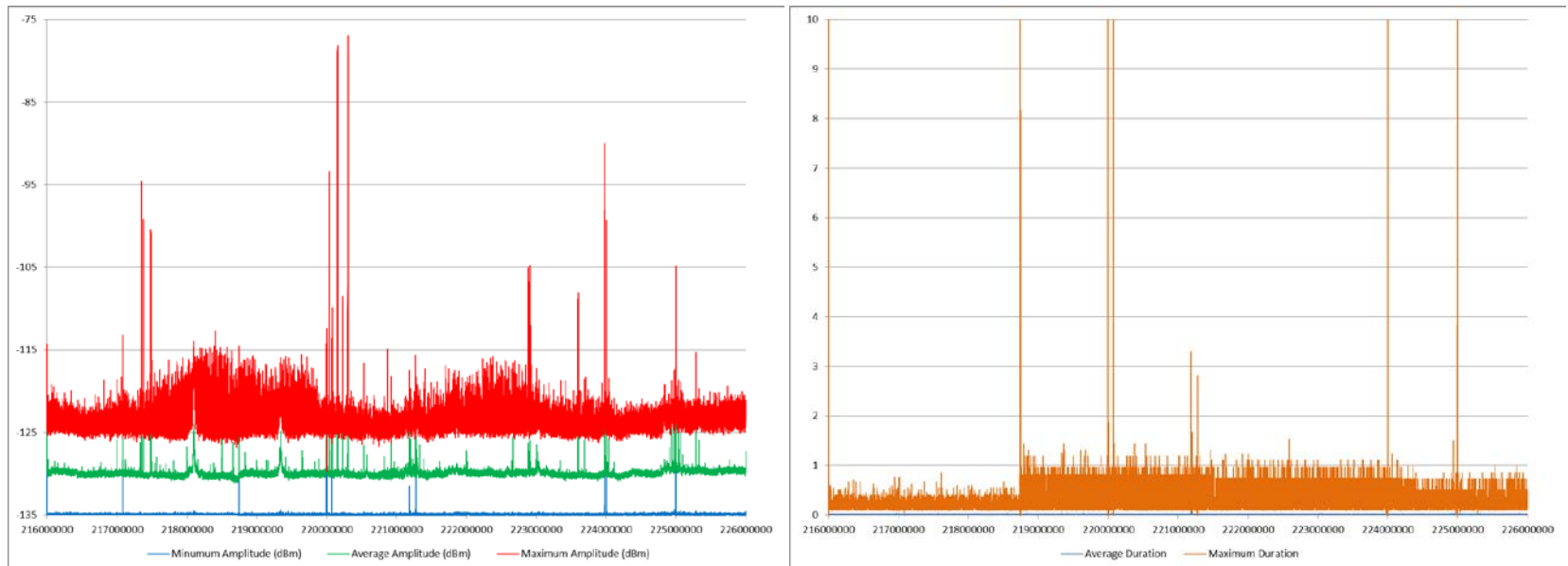
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 2



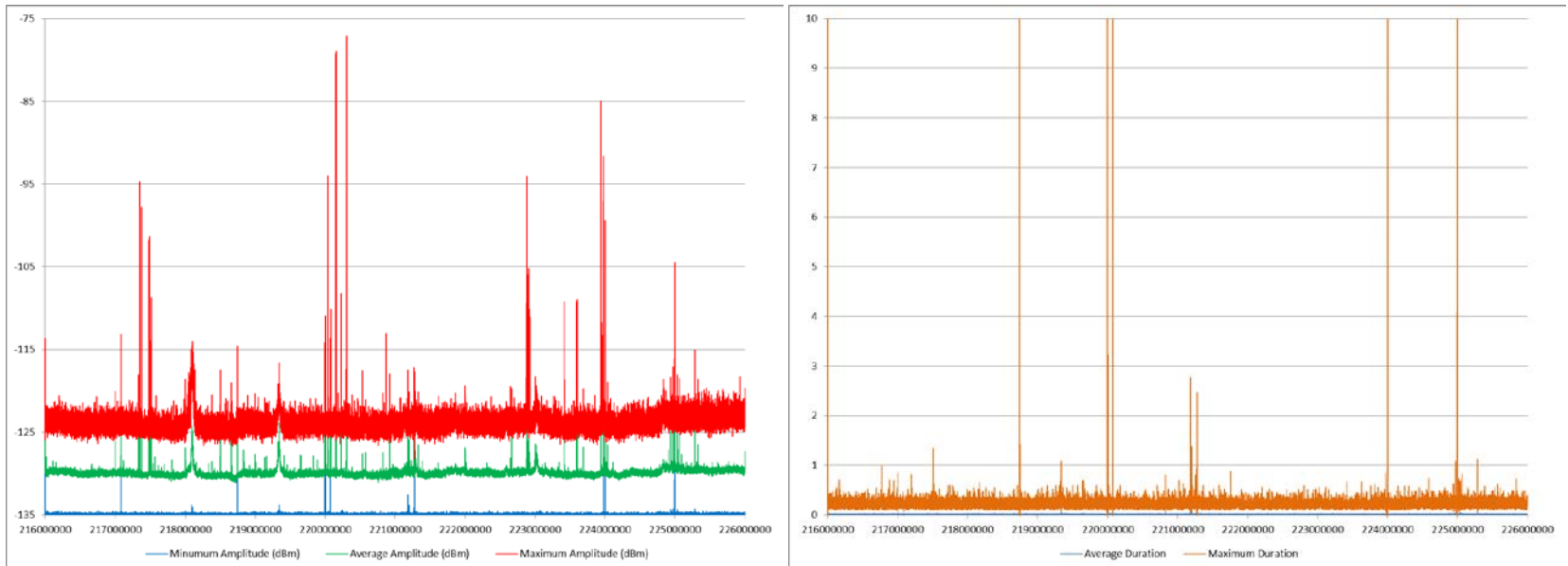
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 3



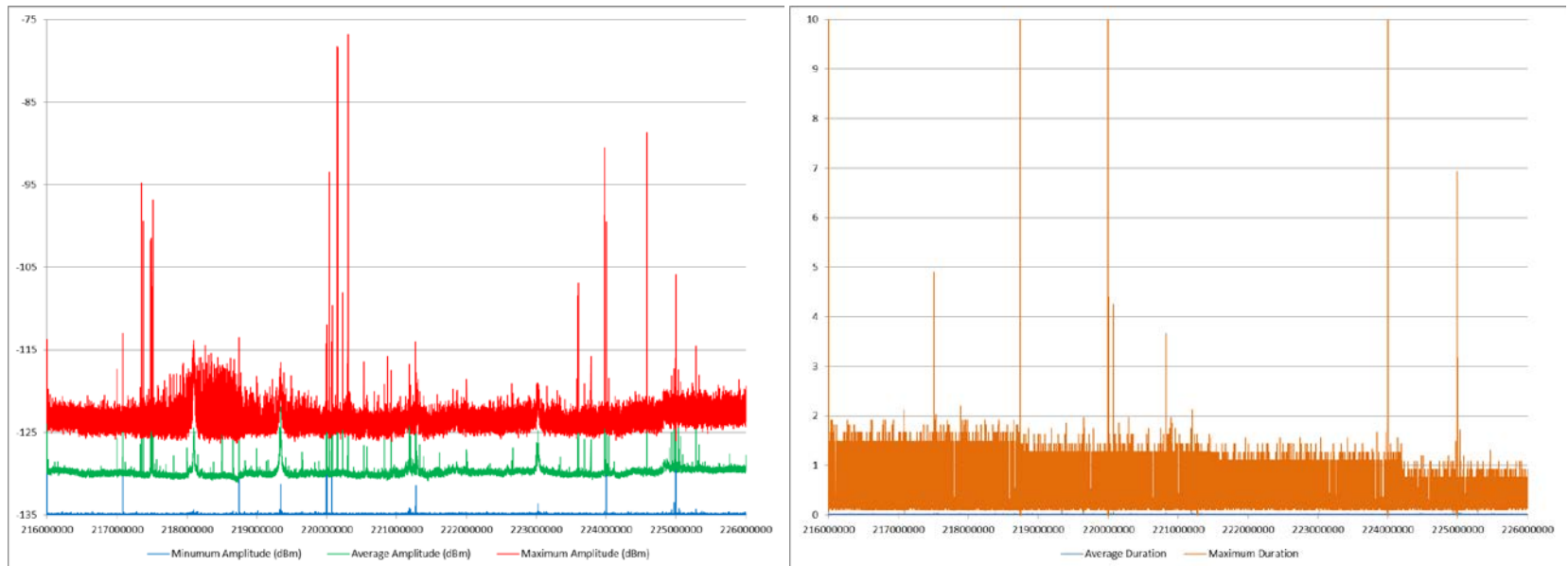
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 4



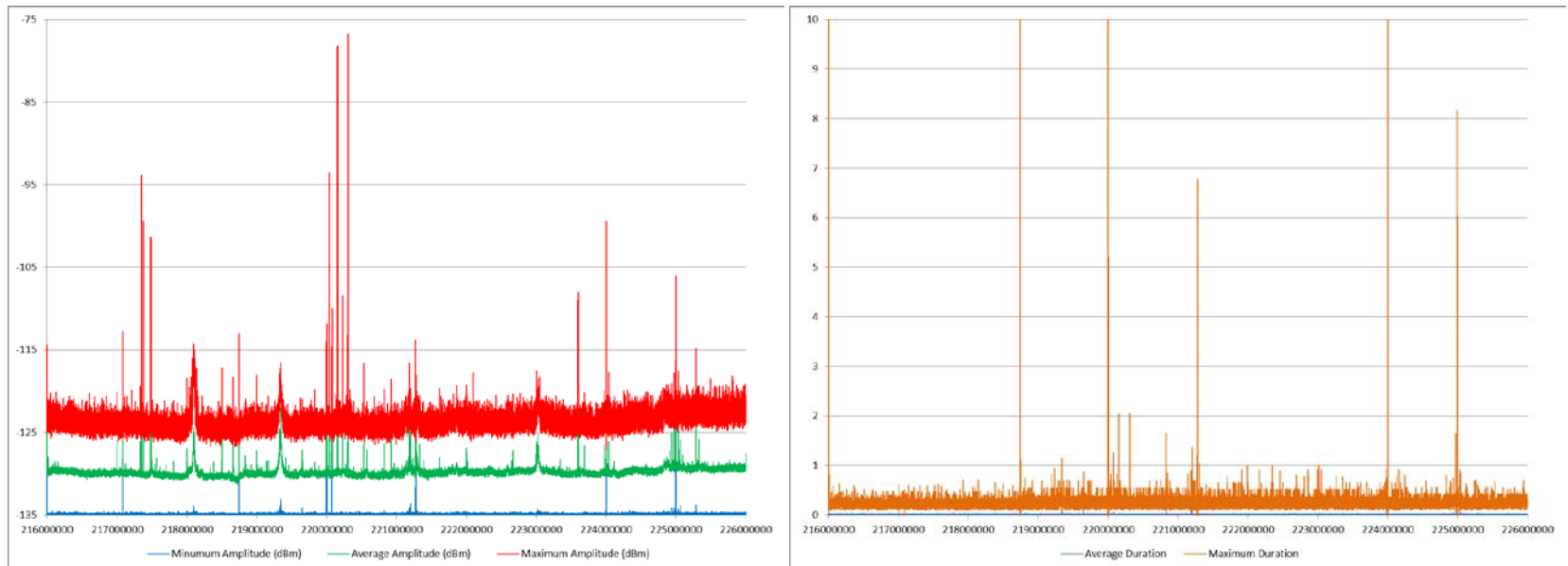
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 5



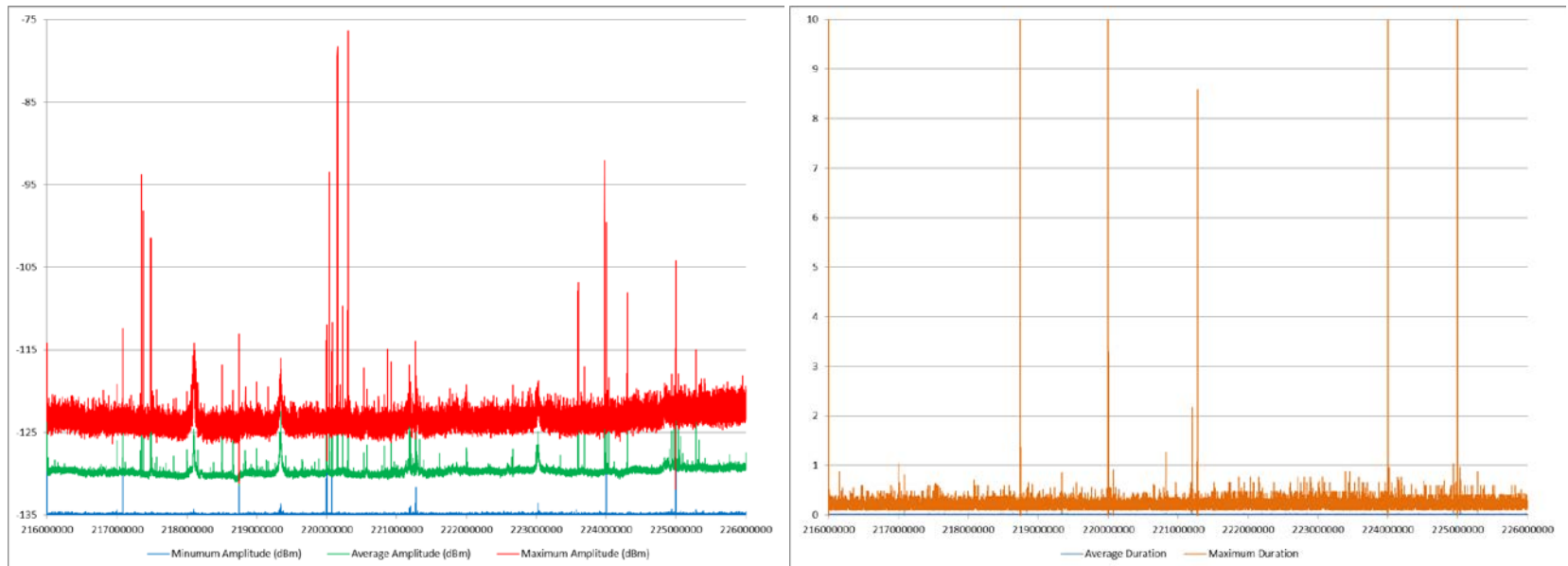
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 6



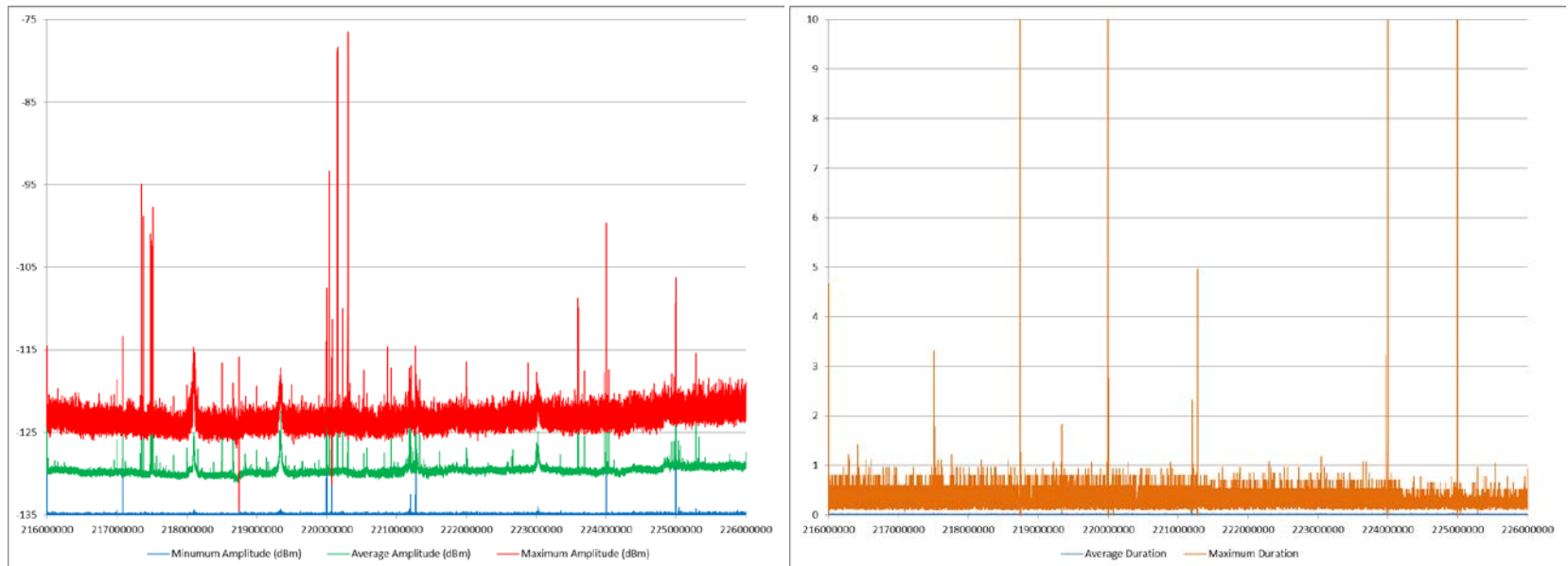
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 7



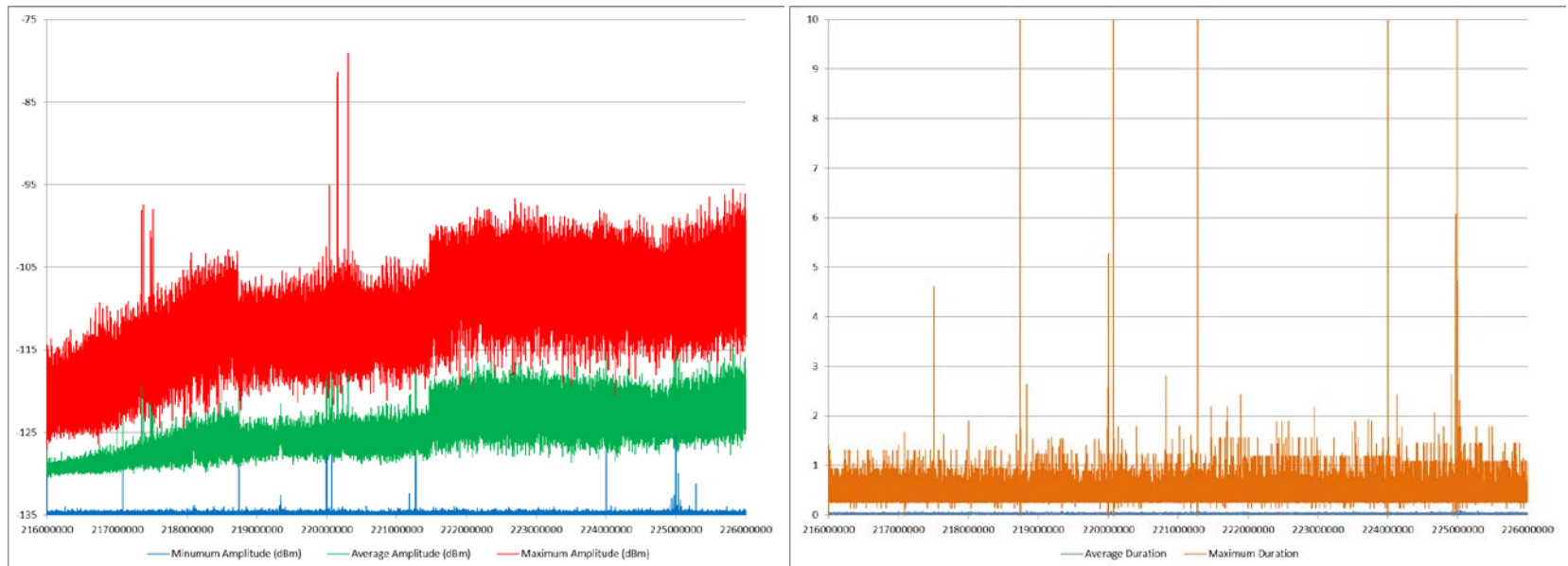
Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Notch 8



Electro-Mechanical EMI

Locomotive Operational State – Shutdown Sequence



Electro-Mechanical EMI

- Unexpected Discovery
 - Prestart Warning Bell prior to Startup Sequence generates significant EMI Noise in 220 MHz Spectrum
 - Identical Bell in Cab intended for signaling between crews in a consist does not generate significant EMI Noise
 - Observed on Dash 9s and Evolution Series Locomotives
 - Acoustical Observation: Warning Bell sounds like a buzzer or contactor possibly operating at the same time
 - Further Testing with OEM recommended TCP to determine source of EMI Noise and possible Mitigation such as arc suppression treatment, or migration to solid state warning devices

Electro-Mechanical EMI

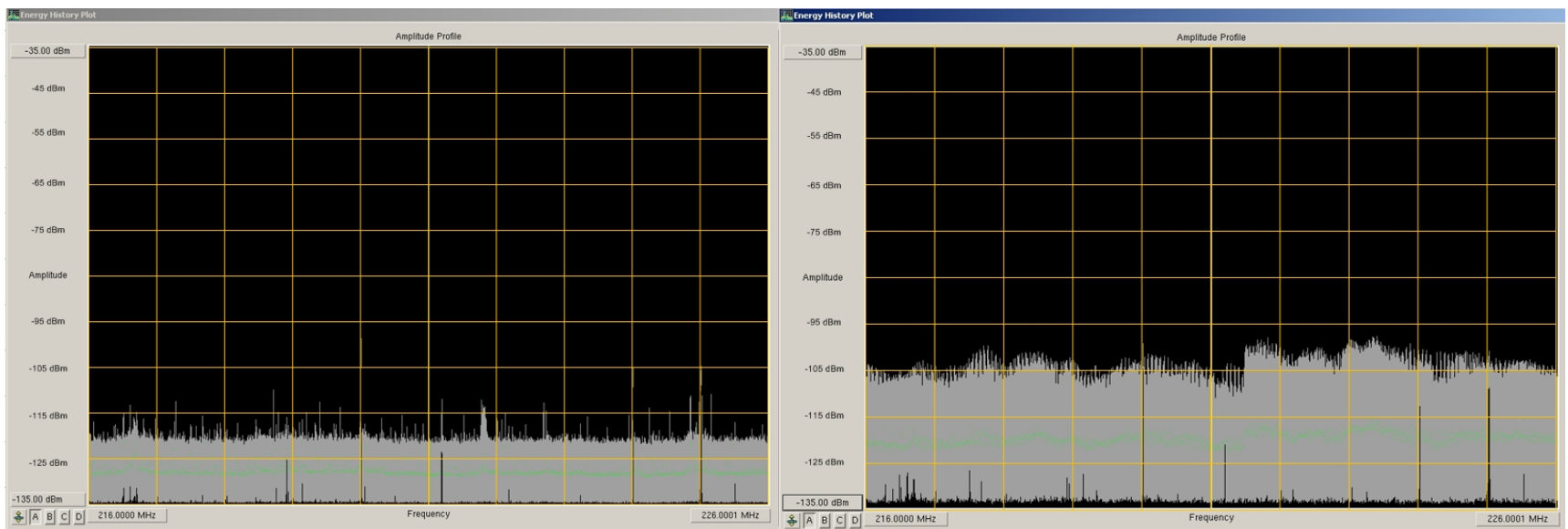
The Bell



Electro-Mechanical EMI

ES44ACH Engine Off
216 MHz to 226 MHz

ES44ACH Warning Bell
216 MHz to 226 MHz

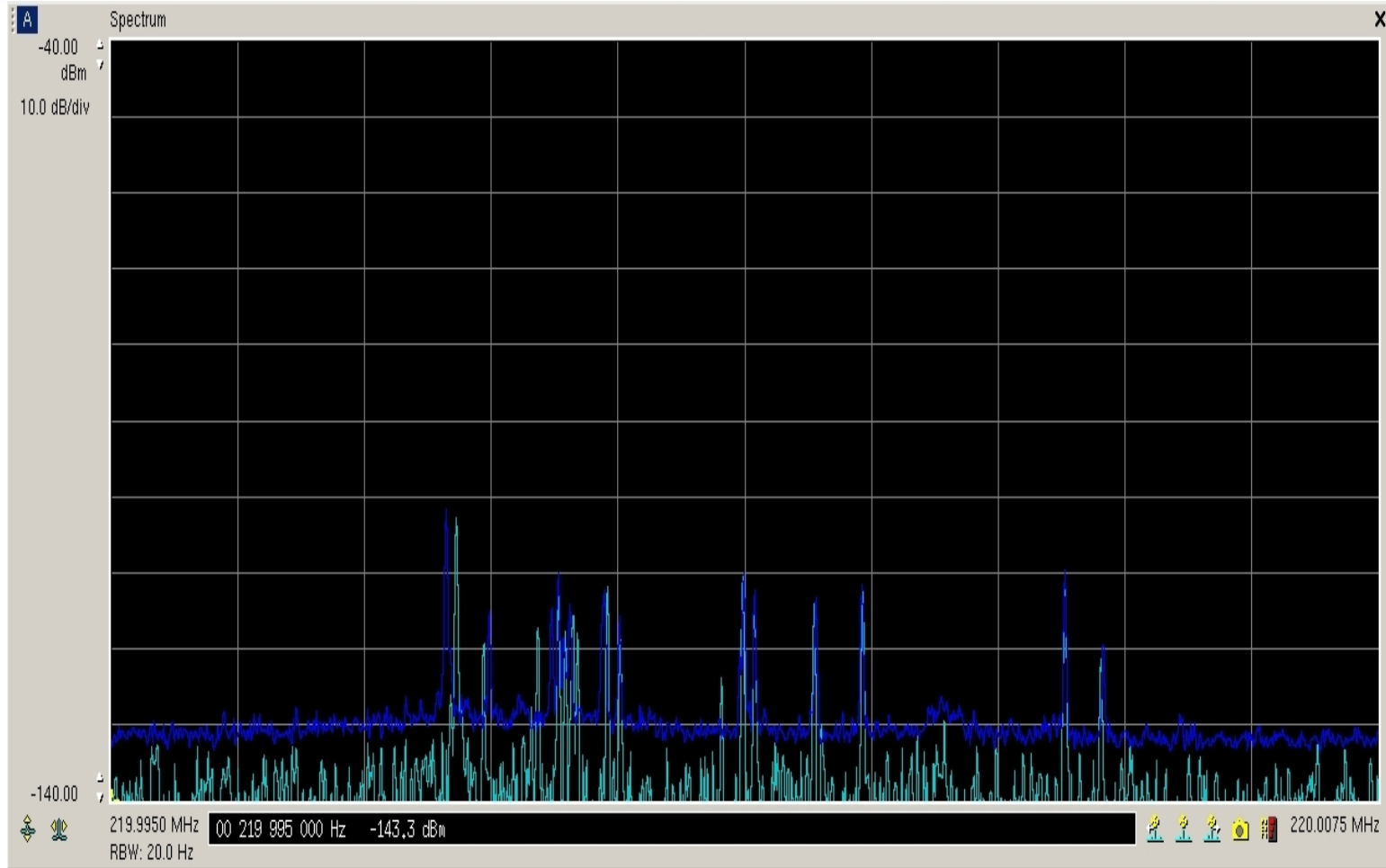


Electro-Mechanical EMI

- Unexpected Discovery
 - Multiple Discrete Signals discovered within a 12.5 kHz segment of PTC Spectrum
 - Generated by Onboard Power Supplies
 - One signal isolated to Cab Signal Power Supply
 - Others present until BCCB Breaker Disengaged
 - Appear to vary slightly in Frequency, perhaps due to Load or Thermal conditions
 - Signals similar in character detected from other Locomotives nearby and these frequencies varied somewhat across the PTC 220 Spectrum
 - Observations Suggest that these may be tunable, perhaps OEM can tune them out of PTC Spectrum

Electro-Mechanical EMI

On Board Power Supply Generated Artifacts

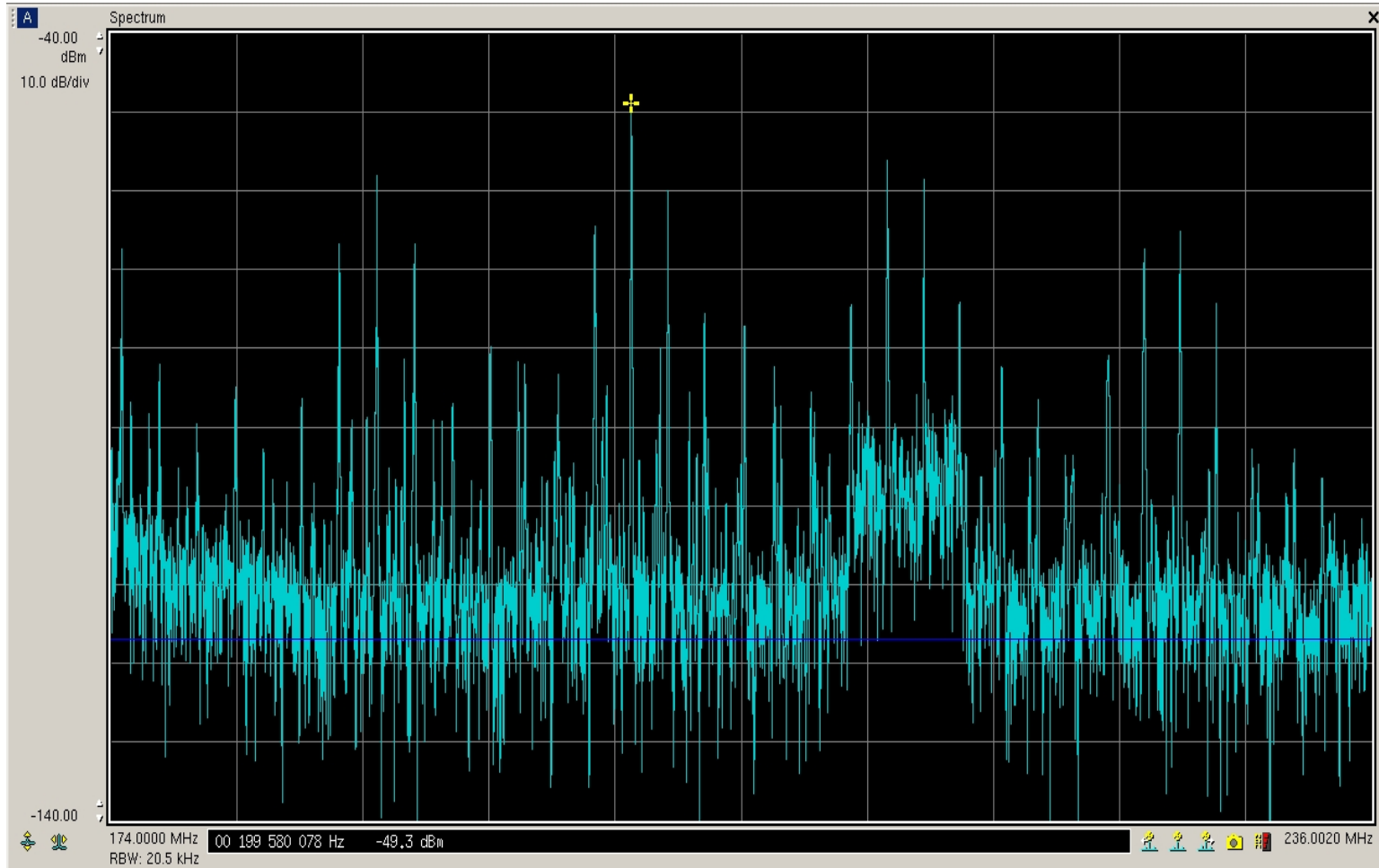


Electro-Mechanical EMI

- Unexpected Discovery
 - Intermittent and initially unexplainable RFI encountered while Testing
 - Off-Platform and Off-premises Drive Test Investigation revealed Signal Leakage from Local Cable Company Infrastructure

Electro-Mechanical EMI

Off Platform Investigation RFI from Local Cable Company



Electro-Mechanical EMI

Off Platform Investigation RFI from Local Cable Company



Electro-Mechanical EMI

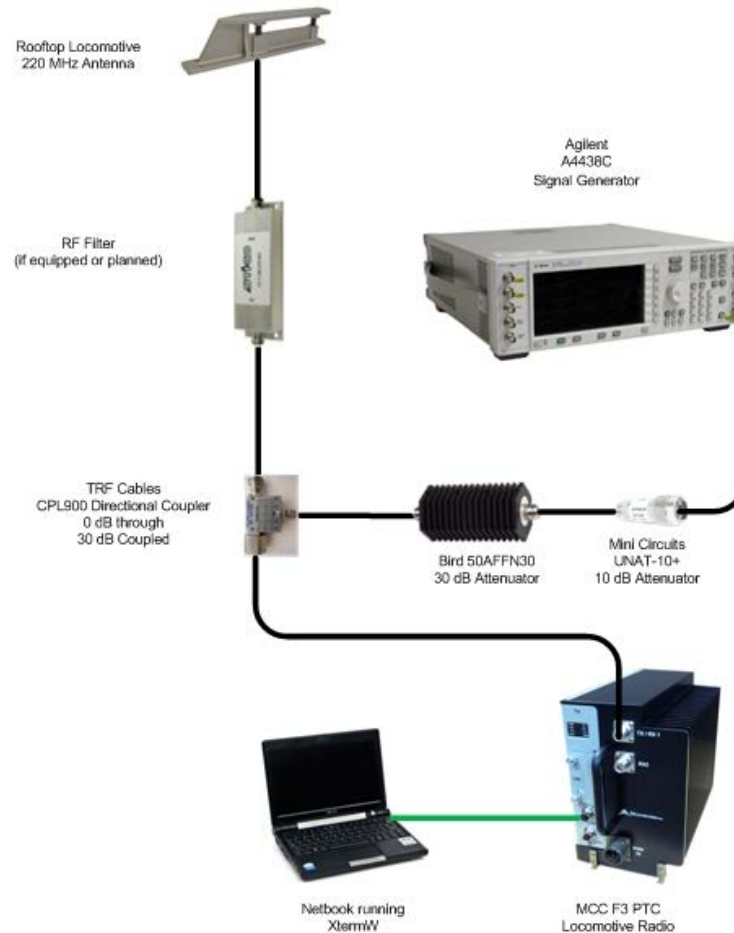
Off Platform Investigation RFI from Local Cable Company



BER Test

- Purpose of this Test
 - Determine the impact of Electromechanical EMI on PTC Radio Reception from the perspective of the Locomotive Radio Receiver
 - Using PN9 packets with FEC over DQPSK
 - Antenna and Filter Disconnected from Directional Coupler (and open port terminated) establishing a Baseline and verifying Radio Specification Compliance
 - Antenna and Filter Reconnected for Testing
 - Resetting Amplitude as needed to sustain a BER of E-4 throughout Ten Locomotive Operational States

BER Test



BER Test

	Isolated	Off	Idle	Notch 1	Notch 2	Notch 3	Notch 4	Notch 5	Notch 6	Notch 7	Notch 8
44CW-9	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD
SD70M	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD	NTD
44CW-9	-113	-105	-104	-103	-104	-104	-105	-103	-104	-104	-103
C44ACCTE	-113	-107	-104	-103	-103	-105	-106	-105	-105	-104	-104
SD40-3	-113	-109	-108	-108	-107	-107	-107	-107	-107	-107	-107
ES44ACH	-113	-105	-104	-104	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103
SD70M	-113	-109	-108	-107	-107	-106	-109	-109	-109	-109	-106
D9-40CW	-113	-105	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103	-103

Locomotive Noise Testing

- Conclusions
 - Proximity of Antennas in limited Cab Rooftop Space Exacerbates RFI Generation
 - RF Filtering of On-Board Significant Contributor Radios is Imperative to mitigate On-Platform Generated RFI
 - Significant Contributors are 161 Voice, DP-A, DP-B, HOT/EOT, PTC
 - Off Platform RF Sources, such as FM Broadcasters, need to be mitigated through Onboard Filtering and Filtering in the Yard where needed
 - Non-Intentional Radiators, such as Switching Power Supplies and arc-producing devices, need to be considered and addressed
 - Using the BER Test, Locomotive Noise number can be determined to be 10 dB
 - PTC RF Network design limit of -103 dBm for Wayside and Base Signal levels at Tracksides

Questions

- If you have any questions, please contact our Service Desk (<https://support.meteorcomm.com/home>)